



Don Campbell / HP staff
Lisa Cripps-Downey, who is president of the Berrien Community Foundation, said one of the best parts of her job is working with donors. “I am just so privileged to be able to help connect them with what they want their charitable legacy to be, and the good they want to have happen,” she said.

A connection for good

Cripps-Downey shares foundation’s 2026 goals, projects

By LAUREN RICE
HP Staff Writer

ST. JOSEPH — After a busy 2025, Berrien Community Foundation President Lisa Cripps-Downey is preparing for more activity in the new year.

Cripps-Downey said she’s looking forward to some continuing programs, like the Nutrition Exchange of Southwest Michigan, and new projects. New or existing, programs and partnerships come from an interest in meeting the needs of this community, she said.

Cripps-Downey sat down recently with Herald-Palladium Staff Writer Lauren Rice to talk about some accomplishments from 2025 and a look ahead.

How did you get involved here?
What’s funny is, I actually started in here a very long time ago, as the program director. Probably 20 years ago, I started as a program director, then left – went home when my



Don Campbell / HP file photo
Lisa Cripps-Downey, director of the Berrien Community Foundation, thanks members of the Lakeshore and St. Joseph High School dance teams after unloading boxes of feminine hygiene products donated from the Lansing organization Helping Women Period last year at the Berrien Community Foundation in St. Joseph.

daughter was born, went home to sort that out for about a year – and then worked other places.

When this job came open about 10 years ago, I said, “I love the community foundation, I love what they’re

doing, I love the entire atmosphere of a community foundation and the impact a community foundation can have.” I applied, and here we are.

What kept you here for 10 years?

Q & A

LISA
CRIPPS-DOWNEY

When I first got here, there was a big learning curve, but then we got to really start making a big impact in the community. And once you do one thing, it leads to “What’s the next good thing that you can do?”

I think that’s really exciting. The more partners you start working with, the more possibilities there are. And also the more challenges.

We were here through COVID, and ... how do you work your way through this, and come out on the other side as a close-knit community.

Are there any challenges you’ve had to overcome? It sounds like the pandemic might be one of those?

There have been a couple of different challenges. COVID definitely ... for us, we were trying to figure

See CRIPPS-DOWNEY, page A2

Benton Twp. officials lift boil water notice

Water tests clean of contaminants after low pressure incident

By LAUREN RICE
HP Staff Writer

BENTON TOWNSHIP — A boil water notice sent out in Benton Township over the weekend has been lifted as of Tuesday morning.

Supervisor Cathy Yates said ice was blocking the water intake from Lake Michigan, and the township connected into Benton Harbor’s water supply on the interim.

Yates said that connection made the water pressure drop, prompting the boil water order to make sure there were no contaminants in tap water.

“We spoke with EGLE (Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy), they were right along with us this whole journey, and we all agree that we’re good,” she said. “We’ve done testing, the testing came back good, and we did it for more than one day.”

Benton Township Water Plant Superintendent Loren Johnson said the situation was caused by frazil ice. It’s not uncommon, but he said it’s been a few years since it happened in the township.

“Usually, it’ll break away in a few hours,” he said. “This was a special one.”

To pipe water in, the township contracted Diversified Dewatering, which will be available until further notice.

The boil water notice was lifted at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Yates said. Going forward, Yates recommended people make sure systems that retain water, like refrigerators, have their systems flushed.

“They need to make sure they flush their systems, like refrigerators hold water, so those get flushed and we’re good,” she said. “I want to thank (people) for their patience and as a community, we’re moving forward.”

Contact: lrice@TheHP.com, 932-0360

Whitmer says U.S. is ‘ready for a woman president’

By CRAIG MAUGER
The Detroit News (TNS)

LANSING, Mich. — Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer says she believes the U.S. is ready to have a female president, pushing back on doubt cast by former first lady Michelle Obama.

Whitmer, a Democrat whom some see as a potential candidate for president in 2028, was asked by National Public Radio’s Steve Inskeep last week about comments Obama made in November, when she said, in part, the country has “a lot of growing up to do.”

“I love Michelle Obama, so the last thing I want to do is disagree with her,” Whitmer said in response to Inskeep’s question.

See WHITMER, page A2

ICE boosted by billions of dollars in Trump’s bill

By LISA MASCARO
AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON — A ballooning Immigration and Customs Enforcement budget. Hiring bonuses of \$50,000. Swelling ranks of ICE officers, to 22,000, in an expanding national force bigger than most police departments in America.

President Donald Trump promised the largest mass deportation operation in U.S. history, but achieving his goal wouldn’t have been possible without funding from the big tax and spending cuts bill passed by Republicans in Congress, and it’s fueling unprecedented immigration enforcement actions in cities like Minneapolis and beyond.

The GOP’s big bill is “supercharg-

ing ICE,” one budget expert said, in ways that Americans may not fully realize – and that have only just begun.

“I just don’t think people have a sense of the scale,” said Bobby Kogan, senior director of federal budget policy at the Center for American Progress and a former adviser to the Biden administration’s Office of Management and Budget.

“We’re looking at ICE in a way we’ve never seen before,” he said.

Trump’s big bill creates massive law enforcement force

As the Republican president marks the first year of his second term,



Yuki Iwamura / AP
Federal officers stand outside the Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building during a protest on Saturday in Minneapolis.

See ICE, page A6

Index

Classifieds	B5	Nation	A2	Outdoors	B6
Comics	B4	Obituaries	A5	Puzzles	B3
Local	A3	Opinion	A4	Sports	B1

Tomorrow’s Weather

High
24



Low
4



CRIPPS-DOWNEY

From page A1

out how to do all the things that we needed to do, how to support our nonprofit community, and then look at the special needs the community had at that time, which were outside of the normal things we were doing.

We had to do all of this, but we're not supposed to come in contact with each other. I mean, we had our annual meeting in the parking lot of Lake Michigan College. Everybody got really creative, but by that we learned a lot of things, too.

We have our senior care kits project, and we used to have everybody come in here and spend an hour wrapping senior care kits. It was relatively new.

I think everybody kept something that they learned from COVID. It was an interesting time. Now, you look back on it and think, "OK what did I learn? What do I never want to do again?"

So that was a challenge. The funding cuts, I think the state really handled things pretty well with how they've dealt with some of the changes to the grant landscape. We're always looking at that, how that's going to impact people.

What are some of your successes, or good things that happened in 2025?

I wish that RX Kids would have happened in 2025, but launching that was fantastic. We're the fiscal agent, we're supporting that, and I am just so excited for that for our community.

I think that is going to make such an incredible difference for us in so many ways: for the health of our families, for our babies, just the stability of families. I think we're going to see some incredible changes and wonderful things come out of that program.

If we go back to challenges. When that SNAP pause happened, we had just started working with the (Nutrition Exchange of Southwest Michigan), it was a while ago – more than a year ago – that we started seeing grant applications for food pantries. A lot of them. And we were like "Humm, what's going on here?"

We started calling our food pantries. Food costs were going up, there was an increase in food need. We started the Food for Good fund so we could just get pantries past the hump. We started meeting with and working with Senior Nutrition Services, Meals on Wheels, Linda Tinsley, who said "If we work together we can do this better. We've got to start thinking about health."

Food is Health is the collaboration we put together. There's two pillars: there's the community health pillar and there's a clinical pillar of how this works, but it's all built on our regional agriculture. We have such amazing agriculture here. How are we pulling that together so people have healthy foods?

We're looking at 85 percent of health care spending is on diet-related illnesses. Eighty-five percent. We got a great grant from the Cook Plant Foundation. We used that to launch, to start purchasing



Don Campbell / HP file photo

Lisa Cripps-Downey, president of the Berrien Community Foundation, talks about the introduction of the new Rx Kids program during a news conference earlier this year at the Berrien County Conference Room at the Berrien County Health Department.

some local food. We had these pantries coming together, and then the SNAP pause happened.

We had this little baby project, and we're going to send you to war. It was phenomenal. When we started putting the dollars together of "what did it look like if I would have purchased this?" It was more than \$100,000 worth of food that went out through this nutrition exchange.

We had nine donation sites around the community – this community responded like crazy. We said "just bring the stuff here, we'll put it in the back conference room." And I didn't know – we had tables set up, I don't know what we'll get, four grocery bags or whatever.

We were a grocery store. We had so much stuff back there. It was overwhelming, but we had volunteers come in. They sorted, they counted, they made sure we never handed out anything that was out of date.

Five different times, it completely filled up the conference room, then it left. Filled the conference room, and it left, supporting the food pantries.

We had that, and we had donations so we could buy what we needed to buy. Vegetables and proteins and 4,500 eggs. It was locally sourced and it was healthy.

People who are getting their nutrition from a food pantry, we need to make sure we're also thinking about their health, so that they have access to good, healthy food. And this is where it all started. How do we make sure we're supporting our local agriculture ... and we're getting those items to families that need it.

That's something I think is very exciting that happened last year. It was in the challenge department, but now we're moving forward and being able to build and learn from what happened there.

Based on the work we did, we just received \$150,000 grant to continue that work, to build on it. It comes to us, all of those dollars will then go out into the community to help support the work that we're doing so we can make sure our little baby system is

built up.

That we have a good food ecosystem built up in case something were to happen again, or just going into the future, especially considering where we live.

One of the weirdest things last year we did (was) Meat the Need. The (Berrien County) Youth Fair partnered with us. A lot of people buy a pig or they buy a cow, and then they donate it back. Really they're supporting that student. I would say "if you're going to donate it back, donate it to us. We're going to pay for the processing and distribute it."

We had 3,000 pounds of fresh meat to distribute. That was our first foray into the youth fair, and we were like "Yeah, we'll do that again."

What kinds of things are you looking forward to for 2026?

I think we're going to continue the food work. We've got it going, and we're looking forward to continuing with that.

I'm excited because we're going to be building some parks. Last year, we received a Sparks grant from the state DNR, working with Benton Township. They're putting in a new Euclid Park.

We're working closely with them, it's something that was a community foundation, DNR, Council of Michigan Foundations partnership for places that don't have as many parks. Benton Township has one gorgeous, big park, but this is going to be one in Benton Heights.

So, we'll do Euclid Park, and do groundbreaking in the spring. I can't wait to go down the slide. It'll be a long time coming, but that's going to be exciting.

We're starting work on some housing initiatives and continuing with our scholarship program. We do almost half a million dollars in scholarships, with support.

Our donors create these scholarships and we work with a bunch of volunteers who go and read a lot of scholarship applications, and we're able to support more students.

And, continued work with our nonprofit community. The ever-changing needs of

a community, I don't think you can ever anticipate what is coming next.

At least, the last few years have shown me to hold on tight, because it's going to be an interesting ride. We're going to be able to continue that work. Work with RX Kids is coming up this year.

Some of the things we're doing with our scholarship program, which we started recently, is an urgent needs fund. If you are receiving a Berrien Community Foundation scholarship – say, you're at school and you can't get to your job because your tires are bald – scholarships don't tend to cover that, but it's a barrier to finish your education.

We have an urgent needs fund they can apply to. What is that thing that's standing between you and finishing? The goal of the scholarship is to get you to the next level. That urgent needs fund is helping students when it's a crisis.

Lake Michigan College is great to work with on those things because they'll just begin with their students. But this is for any Berrien Community Foundation scholar. ... It's made a life-changing difference for some students.

One of the most fun and amazing things about my job is the people that I get to work with. There are donors who will come and they have a phenomenal idea, and they say "How can we make this happen?"

I am just so privileged to be able to help connect them with what they want their charitable legacy to be, and the good they want to have happen.

Do you have any specific moments that stick with you?

Oh, so many. We put out a grant information catalogue. And we have some donors who (ask) "is it ready yet? We want to see. What do you have? We want to help here." They do that, or they see different things.

There is a need in the community. It doesn't matter if it's BCF funds or if we're just the connector between someone who wants to do good and someone who has a need. Sometimes it's those

moments.

Sometimes it's something really big, like when Carolyn Hanson does Carolyn's Kids. She has so much fun just taking care of kids. Or Steve Upton and Love Your Community and how he really just embraces it because he loves to give.

We've had donors who saw the need for the book fund at Lake Michigan College last year and stood up and said "let's make sure there's never a student who doesn't have the tools they need to succeed." There's so many things like that.

We even have somebody from our grant community where, we'd like to do this grant, but we were about \$1,000 short of what we needed to be able to fulfill that grant. And she loved that grant, and she was like "I've got it. Let me do that."

People are good. They want good things to happen to their friends and neighbors and even people they don't know. I get a little boost of that all the time. Because, truly, people are good.

Do you have any goals for yourself for 2026?

One of the things we're always trying to do is look at how accessible we are. Do people know we're available here? Even a grant information tour: Suzie goes everywhere telling how you can access things at the Berrien Community Foundation. Or grant application writing, if you're unsure or if you've never written one before, come here and let us talk you through it.

Just trying to make sure we are always door open, very accessible, and visiting all portions of our county. That is a constant goal that we are accessible and aware of needs. If there's something I don't know about, I can't direct resources there.

And if there's something that you want to create and do, if you're one of those donors, how do I help you? Even if it's not through the Berrien Community Foundation, that's OK, but just let me connect you to help do the things you want to do.

That's both ends of the lighthouse beam.

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What Macron, head of NATO are saying to Trump behind the scenes

PARIS (AP) — While Europe is pushing back publicly against U.S. President Donald Trump over Greenland, the language appears softer behind the scenes.

Trump published a text message on Tuesday that he received from French President Emmanuel Macron, confirmed as genuine by Macron's office.

Starting with "My friend," Macron's tone was more deferential than the criticism that France and some of its European partner nations are openly voicing against Trump's push to wrest Greenland from NATO ally Denmark.

Before broaching the Greenland dispute, Macron opted in his message to first talk about other issues where he and Trump seem roughly on the same page.

"We are totally in line on Syria. We can do great things on Iran," the French leader wrote in English.

Then, he added: "I do not understand what you are doing on Greenland," immediately followed by: "Let us try to build great things."

That was the only mention that Macron made of the semi-autonomous Danish territory in the two sections of message that Trump published. It wasn't immediately clear from Trump's post when he received the message.

Trump breaks with tradition

World leaders' private messages to each other rarely make it verbatim into the public domain – enabling them to project one face publicly and another to each other.

But Trump is casting traditions and diplomatic niceties to the wind and, in the process, lifting back the curtain on goings-on that usually aren't seen.

This week, a text message that Trump sent to Norway's prime minister also became public, released by the Norwegian government and confirmed by the White House.

In it, Trump linked his aggressive stance on Greenland to last year's decision not to award him the Nobel Peace Prize.

"Considering your Country decided not to give me the Nobel Peace Prize for having stopped 8 Wars PLUS, I no longer feel an obligation to think purely of Peace," the message read.

It concluded, "The World is not secure unless we have Complete and Total Control of Greenland."

WHITMER

From page A1

"But, you know, I think America is ready for a woman president."

Michigan's governor added, "The question comes down to a choice between two people."

Inskeep posted on social media Tuesday a 30-minute video recording of his interview with Whitmer, which took place Thursday at the

Detroit Auto Show.

Whitmer noted that despite Democrat Kamala Harris' loss to Republican Donald Trump in 2024, female candidates won multiple statewide races in both 2024 and 2025. She mentioned Michigan's new U.S. Sen. Elissa Slotkin, new Virginia Gov. Abigail Spanberger and new New Jersey Gov. Mikie Sherrill.

"We saw women win up and down the ballot in hard, important states to win," Whitmer said.

"For whatever reason, we have not had a woman president yet," Whitmer added. "I think we will at some point in the near future."

Gender was not the reason that Harris lost to Trump, Whitmer said, contending that a lot of different factors had come into play in the 2024 presidential election after incumbent Democratic President Joe Biden dropped out of the race in mid-July.

In November 2025, Michelle Obama said the 2024

election showed the country wasn't ready for a female president, according to NBC News.

"That's why I'm like, don't even look at me about running, because you all are lying," Obama said. "You're not ready for a woman. You are not."

Whitmer's interview with NPR touched on an array of other issues, including the economy and her concerns about Trump's administration interfering in upcoming

elections.

Asked why Trump had targeted other Democratic-led states, like Minnesota and California, but not Michigan, Whitmer said her team was still "on high alert."

"Our approach in Michigan is to try to keep the temperature down, to keep open lines of communication, and that's what we're going continue to do," Whitmer said. "And hopefully, we'll continue to be successful."

During much of 2025,

Whitmer tried to maintain a positive relationship with Trump. During an event in April, Trump said Whitmer had done a "a very good job" while announcing Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Macomb County would receive a new squadron of fighter jets.

On whether the Trump administration will allow free and fair elections going forward, Whitmer told Inskeep she's working to ensure Michigan is ready.



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hp

LOCAL & STATE

Niles-Buchanan NAACP hosts MLK celebration

Pastor: ‘It’s time to wake up now and go to work’

By MAXWELL HARDEN
Paxton Media Group

NILES — Dozens of community members braved frigid conditions Monday to celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during a community fellowship breakfast at Mt. Calvary Baptist Church in Niles.

Hosted by the NAACP Niles-Buchanan chapter and Mt. Calvary, the theme of the event was “Unity in Diversity: Don’t Give Up Hope.”

“As we gather to honor the enduring legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., let us

recommit ourselves to his vision. A world where unity strives through our diversity and where every individual dream is valued and respected,” said NAACP President Beverly Woodson. “Our theme ‘Unity in Diversity’ reminds us that our greatest strength is found in coming together and here we are this morning. The snow did stop us, we made it. We only get one chance once a year to celebrate Dr. King’s birthday.”

The annual event featured emcee Cam Herth, a musical selection, a youth presentation from JaNora Crooms and special presentations to Grace Harvey and Danielle Lucas for their years of service contributions to the community.

Pastor Lonell Hudson of the Greater New Jerusalem of



Maxwell Harden / Paxton Media Group

NAACP Niles-Buchanan Chapter President Beverly Woodson speaks Monday during the annual MLK breakfast at Mt. Calvary Baptist Church in Niles.

South Bend was the event’s keynote speaker.

“The dream is kept alive by movement. I say to you all this moment – don’t give up on the dream, don’t give up

on each other, don’t give up what is possible, don’t give up what is right,” Hudson said. “The dream is not even distant. The dream is waiting for us to pick it up and carry

it forward. May we leave this breakfast not just inspired, but ignited. Not just moved, but mobilized. Not just remembering the dream but recommitting ourselves to the dream. Because as long as we keep working, as long as we keep loving, as long as we keep standing together, the dream will never die.”

The NAACP Niles chapter began in March 1942 and has been a voice for human equality by addressing local issues through advocacy and communication, as well as sought to educate members and the public on history and current concerns. The chapter was dissolved in 2018 due to low participation before being revived in 2024 as the Niles-Buchanan chapter.

Event organizers said they believe Dr. King’s message

is more important now than ever, and hope the breakfast will inspire and encourage people to continue working toward a “more equitable and just society.”

Mt. Calvary Pastor Bryant Bacon thanked those in attendance and encouraged everyone to make Dr. King’s dream a reality.

“We’re grateful today to be here to celebrate the legacy, the memory and the work of who Dr. King was,” said Mt. Calvary Pastor Bryant Bacon. “I know what the dream was and it’s time to wake up now and go to work to make the dream a fulfillment. Let’s not leave this dreaming, let’s leave here working to make this thing happen. We’ve done enough dreaming and it’s time to start working now and putting this thing into action.”

FRIGID TRANSPORTATION



Don Campbell / HP staff

A parked car is covered in snow near the Margaret B. Upton Arboretum in St. Joseph as blowing and drifting snow combined with frigid temperatures made travel difficult on Monday across Southwest Michigan.

Three Oaks museum receives grant to update Warren building

By DAVID JOHNSON
Paxton Media Group

THREE OAKS — The Berrien Community Foundation recently presented a check representing an \$11,000 grant to The Region of Three Oaks Museum for planned renovations inside the historic Warren Oil and Gas Building at 7 S. Elm S. in Three Oaks.

For decades, the building housed offices overseeing the vast agricultural operations of the Warren family of Three Oaks. The family owned thousands of acres of land in Southwest Michigan and hundreds of thousands of acres of ranch land in Texas, New Mexico, Colorado and Mexico.

Susan Matheny, program director for the Berrien Community Foundation, said the focus of the grant is to help upgrade the stairway that leads into the building. The check was presented on Jan. 7.

The museum plans to restore the 1933 building to its original art deco look and house exhibits relating to the Warrens and the Featherbone Company, which was the economic lifeblood of the community from the 1880s through the first half of the 20th century. The museum has mounted a capital campaign to fund the project.

Work is expected to begin soon, museum officials said.

More funding

The Region of Three Oaks Museum



David Johnson / Paxton Media Group

Representatives of the Berrien Community Foundation and the Region of Three Oaks Museum are pictured Jan. 7 with the donation check for the Warren Oil and Gas Building.

also has posted on its website that The Pokagon Fund granted its application for \$10,000 to upgrade the electrical systems at the 7 S. Elm St. facility.

The museum plans to replace the electrical panel and cloth-covered wiring in the building, ground all electrical outlets, and eventually replace fluorescent lighting fixtures with art deco lighting fixtures similar to the one that remains in

the building’s entrance.

According to a news release, the non-profit Region of Three Oaks Museum is dedicated to the preservation and presentation of local history.

The museum, located at 5 Featherbone Ave. in Three Oaks, is currently closed while new exhibits are being assembled. It will reopen on the first weekend in May.

Cook Nuclear Plant shuts down Unit 2

By HP STAFF

BRIDGMAN — Indiana Michigan Power’s Cook Nuclear Plant Unit 2 was automatically shut down due to an issue with electronic instrumentation over the weekend.

According to a news release from I&M, the piece of equipment that was identified Sunday morning with an issue monitors steam flow to one of the unit’s four steam generators.

Immediately following the automatic trip, plant operators followed proper protocols to safely remove the reactor from service, placing the unit in a stable condition.

I&M officials said the unit trip was non-complicated, and electric service to customers was not impacted. Cook’s Unit 1 reactor remains safely in service at 100 percent power.

Each of Cook’s two reactors has

four steam generators that create and force steam through the turbines of the main generator to make electricity. The cause of the instrumentation issue is still being investigated. Return to service information is not provided for competitive reasons.

Cook Nuclear Plant is owned and operated by I&M, an AEP company based in Fort Wayne, Ind. I&M’s approximately 2,000 employees serve more than 600,000 customers.

SMC board votes to add five programs

College to expand to dental assisting, criminal justice

By JOHN EBY
Paxton Media Group

DOWAGIAC — Southwestern Michigan College board approved five new programs during a recent meeting.

They include a one-year certificate in criminal justice; an associate’s degree in respiratory therapy; a certificate in dental assisting, which will have a home on the upper floor of the Dale A. Lyons Building; a credential in child development associate; and a certificate in practical nursing.

“My goal is that students can have a credential, sit for a licensing exam and make a living wage no matter where they end our nursing program,” said Dr. Melissa Kennedy, dean of the School of Nursing and Health Services. “This is the final phase. We already implemented Certified Nursing Assistant for when they finish the first semester. This is the next step, for anyone who completes the first and second semester. They can take a seven-week pediatrics and mother/baby course and be eligible to sit for LPN licensing.”

Kennedy said most licensed practical nurses work in long-term care.

“We stopped offering it as a standalone program because there were not many jobs at the time. But with the growing nursing shortage, LPNs are coming back into hospitals and doctors’ offices, while still being the primary providers in long-term care facilities,” Kennedy said. “LPNs can get work experience, then come in third semester for two semesters and move forward (to RN).”

In his president’s report, Brent Brewer said the Flywheel Effect is in full swing at SMC – referring to a business concept popularized by Jim Collins that

describes how sustained momentum builds from consistent, small wins, creating compounding returns and accelerating results over time.

With a week of registration remaining, Brewer said SMC is 151 students ahead of where they were at this time last year – which is an 8.5 percent increase in head count and 7.6 percent up in contact hours. Housing for the spring is at a 94 percent occupancy rate, compared to 89 percent last year.

“Intercollegiate athletics has certainly played a role,” Brewer said, “but the story is bigger than any single factor, the result of many deliberate pushes working together. High-quality online courses designed by our faculty and aligned with strong student demand. Growing dual enrollment participation – we are over 600 for the first time in many years. Improved retention. Technology that truly supports our learners. And more in-demand programs like the ones Dean Kennedy talked about. However, this is a marathon, not a sprint, and we must keep pushing.”

During the meeting, Trustee Todd Obren presented Nursing Department Chair Rona Goodrich of Paw Paw with her 10-year service pin.

“Rona’s been a nurse for 33 years,” Kennedy said. “She’s worked across a variety of practice settings throughout her career, including medical surgical nursing, home care, pediatrics, rehabilitation, long-term care, as well as nursing management and director-level roles. Her true passion, however, is teaching. She’s been a member of the SMC community since 2015.”

Goodrich is married and has two children, 19 and 24, who attend Western Michigan University.

Trustees acknowledged 24 gifts to the SMC Foundation totaling \$18,846 and also accepted five donations to the college amounting to \$5,516.



Photo provided

Trustee Todd Obren presented Nursing Department Chair Rona Goodrich of Paw Paw with her 10-year service pin.

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Local News Editor

Let kids play without their phones

I had the opportunity to watch my grandson, Pippin, in the River Valley Band’s Christmas concert on Dec. 16. It was delightful. Nothing fancy, just simple and well-thought-out performances of the bands, directed by Kirsten Pagel, interfaced with choirs and solos. Watching those sixth- through 12th-graders brought tears to my eyes.

I have often heard older folks criticizing younger generations while conveniently forgetting the salient facts of their own. Surely, you’ve heard it also. “Teenagers these days are all lazy. They have no respect for their elders. The music they listen to is terrible.” The truth is that transitioning from childhood to adulthood has always been a difficult time for any emerging generation. Teachers, mentors and leaders in academics, sports, art and church have always stepped up to support parents. But now, with smartphones and social media (TikTok, Youtube, Instagram, etc.), things are drastically different for our youth. Some say desperate.

I was born in 1955 and grew up in the ’60s and early ’70s. I had a normal childhood for the times. There weren’t any computers or smartphones. When I was in elementary school, the moms actually did step out on the porch at dusk and yell our names to come home for dinner. We played sandlot baseball in an empty lot down the street. Hide-and-seek was playing army with BB guns in a 2-block area of our neighborhood in Lake Wales, Fla. No worries! We only shot each other below the neck. We went barefoot in the summers and compared methods for pulling the sand spurs out.

I rode horses and hunted at my uncle’s hunting camp. Out there, I was driving a 4-wheel-drive Jeep by the time I was 12. It didn’t have brakes so we just coasted to stops. Once, coming

Joe Hanchey
Opinion
Maker



back into camp and barely moving, I wondered what it would be like to use an oak tree to stop. That was not one of my best ideas. The physics of kinetic energy were in play that day, my friends. Back at home, my brother, Bill, and I discovered what happens when you take the spark plug wire off his Sears minibike, put your finger in it and then pull the start cord. We were taught good manners so, of course, we shared that knowledge with the whole neighborhood. That turned out to be a great idea.

I played Little League baseball and junior high football. My first job, at 14, was washing dishes at Saint Joseph Hospital in Punta Gorda, Fla. In high school, I water skied a lot. I read everything written by science fiction authors like Robert Heinlein, Ray Bradbury and Isaac Asimov. Looking back, I didn’t have time for TikTok.

Now in 2026, we are well past worrying about how many hours youth spend playing video games. For many preteen and teenagers, their addictive use of social media on smartphones has the appearance to be a generational tragedy in process. I don’t think it’s a problem for all of them. I know many who have active lives away from their smartphones. But about social media in the hands of our youth, Jonathan Haidt writes in “The Anxious Generation”: “Even if the content on these sites could somehow be filtered effectively to remove obviously harmful material, the addictive design of these platforms reduces the time available for face-to-face play in the real world. The reduction is so severe that we

might refer to smartphones and tablets in the hands of children as ‘experience blockers.’ Of course, a smartphone opens up worlds of new possible experiences, including video games (which are forms of play) and virtual long-distance friendships. But this happens at the cost of reducing the kinds of experiences humans evolved for and that they must have in abundance to become socially functional adults.”

Haidt calls on parents to transition their children from a phone-based childhood back to a play-based upbringing. He proposes phone-free schools, free time after school, relying on them to do things at home, finding ways for them to nurture and lead others and part-time jobs as teenagers. I know that the days of letting them play army with BB guns are behind us, but many other time-honored activities are available. We must proactively create and manage desirable alternates to social media. Tasks around the house should be considered valuable for self-worth, not unpleasant chores. Part-time jobs in high school teach disciplines and accomplishments outside of the home. I still remember being trusted to deliver appliances by myself working at Al’s Appliances.

Camping, boating and backpacking are things that you can do together or they can do with friends. Personal growth and breakthroughs occur through activities of imagination and interacting directly with other humans, not social media. Parents can call for schools to implement phone-free policies and institute phone-free times at home, just like limiting the amount of time playing video games. It won’t be easy. Ginger Hanchey is still working on me to stop spending so much time scrolling on my smartphone for the latest news. But there should not be any second thoughts when your teen

resists. One student quoted in “The Anxious Generation” acknowledged that when his phone is taken away at school, he thinks about it for maybe 15 minutes, then he lets it go and enjoys doing stuff without it. In literally minutes, they’ll be happier.

For some years, my wife, Ginger, and I taught middle school Sunday School at our church. I was a high school youth group volunteer at the same time. When I retired, I taught as a substitute at local middle and high schools. So, I am familiar with teens and pre-teens. I like them. They have a wonderful capacity for “good mischief.” They’re not any lazier than we were and it’s not their fault that their music is terrible. They just don’t know any better! While it may scare the “bejeebus” out of their parents, they are going to be running the place someday. So, let’s free them from social media to help them grow up with the same creativity, resourcefulness and experimentation as we did. They’re depending on us.

And as far as music goes, let’s introduce them to the good stuff. For me, that’s classic rock like vintage 1970s Elton John, some of my favorite worship music from the WOW Worship Yellow CD or “Signs” by the Five Man Electrical Band.

*And the sign said
"Everybody welcome
Come in, kneel down and pray"
But when they passed around
the plate at the end of it all
I didn't have a penny to pay
So I got me a pen and a paper
And I made up my own little sign
I said, "Thank you, Lord, for
thinkin' 'bout me
I'm alive and doin' fine."
Joe Hanchey is a retired global
engineering manager and lives in St.
Joseph with Ginger Hanchey. Email:
jghanchey@outlook.com*

Airlines need better medical kits for in-flight emergencies

By TUSHARA SURAPANENI
Chicago Tribune

Every holiday season, millions of Americans hop on a plane to visit friends and family. Most people are anxious about flight delays and cancellations, but as an emergency room physician, there’s one announcement I dread the most: “Is there a doctor on board?” My reluctance isn’t due to any potential inconvenience or legal liability, but rather the fear of facing a sick passenger without the basic equipment or medications needed to help them.

In-flight medical emergencies are rare but happen more often than you might think. In contrast to a prior study that estimated they happen on approximately 1 per 604 flights, recently published analysis of data collected from 84 airlines found that medical emergencies were reported in 1 out of every 212 flights. For context, the the Federal Aviation Administration handles about 44,000 flights daily. That works out to roughly 70 to 200 medical emergencies a day over U.S. skies.

Here’s how those in-flight emergencies can play out: Flight attendants, who are trained in CPR and first aid skills, are the first to respond to an unwell passenger. They might radio a ground team that includes an on-call physician, who can guide treatment and advise whether the flight should be diverted. If a patient’s condition is more serious, crew members have discretion to request assistance from medical professionals who are passengers.

On both occasions I volunteered, I was traveling on long-haul international flights and assumed there was at least one other physician on board who would step forward. Well, I assumed wrong. One of those flights was ultimately diverted just before we left American airspace so the passenger could be transported to a hospital.

A few takeaways from those experiences: Heartbeats, unlike a crying infant, can’t be heard over a plane’s engine; starting an intravenous line is especially tricky when you’re hurtling through the sky at 500 mph; and we desperately need the FAA to expand its requirements for emergency medical kits.

The medical kits I used contained minimal supplies such as a stethoscope, manual blood pressure cuff, IV catheters, vials of epinephrine and lidocaine to treat cardiac arrest, and defibrillator. I was surprised at how barebones they were. It made more sense after I learned that the FAA hasn’t updated its basic requirements for emergency medical kits since 2004.

In 2024, Congress passed its reauthorization of the FAA. The bill directs the agency to review the costs and benefits of adding new medications and equipment to emergency medical kits, including whether their contents can adequately treat opioid overdose and anaphylaxis, a life-threatening allergic reaction. Hopefully the FAA is working on new regulations, but the agency hasn’t provided any indication that they’ll be arriving soon.

If the FAA moves forward with changing medical kits as suggested in the reauthorization bill, airlines will be required to carry naloxone to reverse opioid overdose and epinephrine in the appropriate dosage and route for anaphylaxis. (Current guidelines call for epinephrine in the concentration used to treat cardiac arrest; to dilute it to the correct dosage for anaphylaxis requires a medical professional making on-the-fly calculations.)

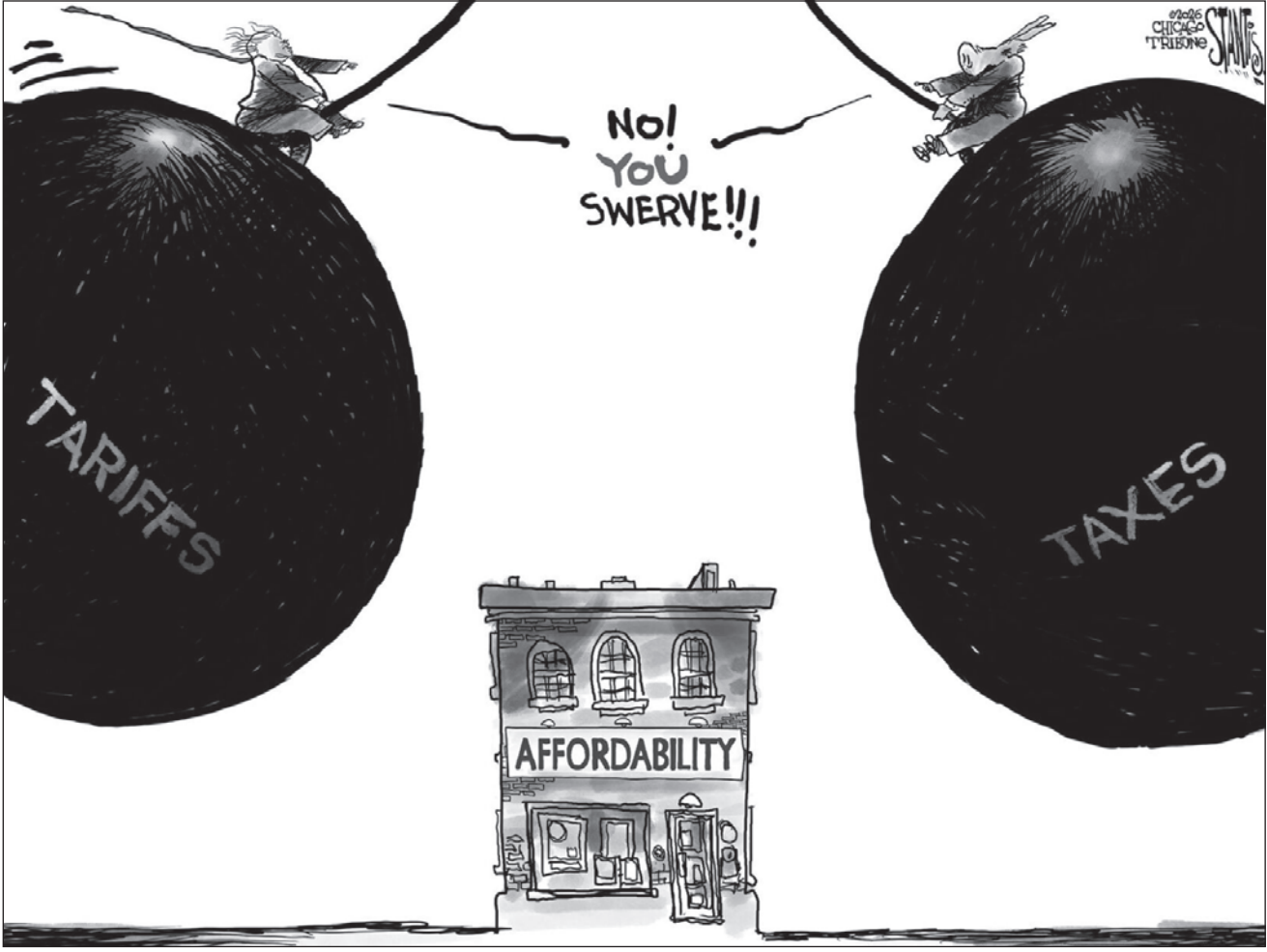
While these additions would be welcome, other basic equipment and medications should be included as the bare minimum. I don’t expect airplanes to act like makeshift ERs or flying ambulances, but a few simple, evidence-based provisions can make a major difference for unwell passengers. Here are a few items on my wish list, many of which are backed by the American Medical Association:

- Pulse oximeter to measure oxygen.
- Glucometer to measure blood sugar.
- Automated blood pressure cuff.
- Pediatric airway equipment.
- Benzodiazepine that can be injected into the muscle to treat prolonged seizures.
- Naloxone nasal spray for opioid overdose.
- Epinephrine auto-injectors for anaphylaxis, in adult and pediatric dosages.
- Oral glucose gel and glucagon for treatment of low blood sugar.

Several U.S. airlines already carry some of these items on board, including Southwest Airlines and Delta, though the exact contents of airlines’ medical kits are not readily shared online by every carrier. Official statements from several major American carriers about their medical kits have been vague. This leaves good Samaritan medical providers wondering what awaits them inside each bag. Improving transparency and standards for medical kits not only benefits passengers, but may also help prevent unplanned flight diversions, which can cost airlines \$70,000 to \$230,000.

While in-flight medical emergencies may be infrequent, the FAA’s mission is to prioritize safety even in the rarest of situations. Expanding the basic requirements for airline’s emergency medical supplies ensures standardization and improves passenger safety. For safe travels, it’s time for the FAA to heed Congress and update its policies for in-flight medical kits.

Dr. Tushara Surapaneni is a board-certified emergency medicine physician and public voices fellow of The OpEd Project. This column first appeared in the Chicago Tribune.



LETTERS

Pardon my confusion

Editor,
Recently, a televised news program was on when I entered the room. Was that a riot being captured for broadcast? Since I missed the intro to the broadcast I waited to see if the riot was in Minneapolis, or was it Chicago – Los Angeles – Portland? Actually it was in Iran, or was it Venezuela? Without regard to its actual location, the scene is repeated over and over in the United States, South America and the Middle East. In this case it was Iran, where protesters are committing themselves to topple the regime at great risk of death to live in a democracy. Our president has vowed to take action – possibly military – to quell the uprising on behalf of the protesters. What? Pardon my confusion, but why is the president planning to unleash military action in another country to protect protesters fighting for democracy, while unleashing

Submit a letter to the editor

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Regular mail: Editorial Page, The Herald-Palladium, P.O. Box 128, St. Joseph, MI 49085
All letters should include a daytime

telephone number and street address for verification. Letters must be 500 words or fewer. The Herald-Palladium reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, grammar, inappropriate content and libel. Anonymous letters will not be published.

military-style action against U.S. protesters who are trying to preserve our democracy?

Val Schnable
St. Joseph

Let’s clean up Hartford’s message

Editor,
The past few years, news wise, have not reflected favorably upon our little town. Through no fault of its city commission or residents, Hartford has endured many discouraging events. From the specter of a 12-year-old armed robber to illicit drug sales by its police chief and new

public works department manager, this town must be viewed by outsiders as the modern version of Sodom and Gomorrah or Dodge City. We know this is not true, but what must it look like to visitors when they drive around our town and observe profane political signs, with abundant f-bombs, lining wooden fences?

They surely can’t be impressed by the sight, and they must wonder what effect the presence of these abominations has upon youngsters who walk by them every day. Too, what do the signs say about the mentality of those who choose to post the signs? It’s not a

pleasant thought, nor does it broadcast a very favorable message from Hartford to the world.

We have some new faces in the mayor and three commission seats and don’t you think the formation of a Mayor’s Committee to Clean Up Hartford’s Image is an idea whose time has come? It makes no sense at all to welcome visitors with signs at the city limits boasting of sports and other notable accomplishments, and then let them drive by signs saying “F- Biden” or “F- anyone” who cannot accept the current leadership of our country.

I urge you, as the leaders of our town, to form a committee, headed by her honor, the mayor, to do everything possible to promote a positive image of our city to any and all. It’s what responsible, literate and caring town leaders do.

Thanks for your time and consideration.

John F. McLellan
Hartford

OBITUARIES

Gloriana Antonovich Siewert

March 2, 1928 – Jan. 9, 2026

Gloriana Antonovich Siewert passed away on Jan. 9, 2026, at Corewell Health Lakeland Hospital, St. Joseph, at the age of 97.



garden- ing, canning and solving jigsaw puzzles with her family and neighbors. Two years ago, she moved to Woodland Terrace in Coloma where she was well cared for.

She was born to John and Wilhelmina Antonovich on March 2, 1928, in Millburg. Following the death of her mother in 1929, she lived with her foster parents, James and Luella Adams, on Adams Apple Farm in Millburg.

Gloria graduated from Benton Harbor High School in 1945 and the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps at Mercy Hospital in 1948. In 1949, she married Ralph Siewert in Benton Harbor where they made their home. Gloria worked at Mercy Hospital and later as director of nursing at Jordan’s Nursing Home in Bridgman.

She volunteered with the Office of Civil Defense in the 1950s. After retirement, she volunteered at Woodland Terrace and Lakeland Hospital where she received recognition for 4,000 hours of volunteer service. She was a charter member of Peace Lutheran Church where she was a faithful participant in the quilting group. Gloria lived at her home in St. Joseph where she enjoyed sewing,

Gloria is survived by her three children: Diane (John) Herrman, Roger Siewert and Carole (Marc) Keen; her four grandchildren: Jonathan and Ben (Jessica) Herrman, Brendan (Elizabeth) Keen and Kim (Brent) Huck; her six great-grandchildren: Bodie, Finn, Harper, Reid, Harrison and Louis; her two sisters-in-law: Jean Antonovich and Nancy Schoenow, and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Ralph, in 1990; her parents; foster parents; two brothers: Andrew Antonovich and William Schoenow; her half-sister, Helen Zuhl and half-brothers: Ferdinand, Edward and John Gerlach.

A memorial service will be at 11 a.m. on Saturday, May 16, at Peace Lutheran Church, St. Joseph, with a luncheon to follow. Visitation with the family will take place before the service from 10-11 a.m. Donations may be made to the church or the charity of your choice.

Katie Mae Cooper Powell

May 22, 1939 – Jan. 4, 2026

Katie Mae Cooper Powell, 86, of Benton Harbor departed this life at home surrounded by her family on Jan. 4, 2026.



Home Health Care in Benton Harbor. She took pleasure in gardening, listening to gospel music, sewing, spending time with family, shopping and creating art.

A service celebrating her life will be Friday, Jan. 23, at the Second Baptist Church, Benton Harbor. The visitation begins at 10 a.m. followed by the service at 11 a.m. Please visit www.robbsbrothersfh.com to sign the guest book online.

Katie was born May 22, 1939, to the union of Emma and Elijah Cooper, in Hayti, Mo. She went to School in Poplar Bluff, Mo., and accepted Christ at a young age.

Katie married Hurtis Lee Powell on Aug. 18, 1961, and was a member of Second Baptist Church for more than 40 years. Katie worked at VM in Benton Harbor, Holly’s Landing in St. Joseph and

Katie leaves to cherish her memory, her children: Sheila Powell and Hurtis (Essie) Cooper; siblings: Billy (Dora) Cooper, Kenny (Gail) Cooper, Betty Cooper, and Josephine (Harold) Scott; 22 grandchildren; 104 great-grandchildren; special grandson, Quantel Powell; a host of nieces, nephews, family and friends.

Katie is preceded in death by her children: Kateia Powell, Ricky Powell, Laurie James, Floyd Cooper and Elvis Cooper; siblings: Joe Cooper, Jacob Cooper, Esau Cooper, Rosie Powell and Deborah Davis.

Jerry D. Hunt

Jerry Dean Hunt, also known as “The Walking Man’s Friend,” was born on Sept. 17, 1948, on Harlingen, Texas. He was one of seven siblings, including his twin brother, Terry Gene, born to Arthur Hamer and Pattie Lou Hunt.



Stevensville United Methodist Church, 5506 Ridge Road, Stevensville with the Rev. Elise Low-Edwards officiating. Friends may visit with the family beginning at 10 a.m. Saturday, Masonic Rites will be conducted by St. Joseph Masonic Lodge #437 at 11:30 a.m. with Jerry’s celebration of life to follow Masonic Rites.

Donations in Jerry’s memory can be made to Stevensville United Methodist Church or St. Joseph Masonic Lodge 437, the Humane Society of Southwestern Michigan, or the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen.

A celebration of life service will be Saturday, Jan. 24, at

Those wishing to sign Jerry’s memory book online may do so at www.starks-menchingner.com. Please use this link for a live stream of the service for Jerry: <https://bit.ly/JerryHunt>.

Christine Stevens

Dec. 9, 1951 – Jan. 4, 2026

Christine Stevens, 74, of Union Pier fell asleep in death on Sunday, Jan. 4, 2026, at Corewell Health Merlin & Carolyn Hanson Hospice Center, Stevensville, following a courageous battle with cancer.



during her illness. She was always ready with a smile and delighted in making her friends laugh. A devoted animal lover, she shared her days with cherished cats and dogs and extended that same kindness and care to the local wildlife she held dear.

Christine’s life began on Dec. 9, 1951, in Indianapolis. She was the youngest of two daughters born to Charles and Lillian Stevens. Chris grew up on a farm near Indianapolis, where she developed a lifelong love of animals and nature, two things she treasured deeply throughout her life. She cherished her family and her farm upbringing, which shaped her generous and compassionate spirit.

During her school years, Chris was involved in many activities, including band, choir and the yearbook club. After graduating from high school, she attended Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, where she earned a bachelor’s of arts in political science. She later studied in Pennsylvania, earning her paralegal certification, and went on to achieve a master of business administration from Loyola University Chicago.

Chris began her professional career with the First National Bank of Chicago in the trust department. Her banking career spanned more than 30 years and took her through several departments, ultimately culminating in her role as managing director at JPMorgan Capital Corp. (formerly the leasing department). In that role, she served as a principal negotiator on international deals involving airlines, shipping companies, sports arenas, power plants and more. Though small in stature, Chris was a mighty powerhouse who never backed down from a challenge.

Chris greatly enjoyed traveling the world, always returning home with souvenirs and stories from her adventures. She retired in 2006 and moved to Union Pier where she was able to care for her aging parents and fully pursue her love of gardening, animals, and the natural beauty around her.

Chris was well known for her incredible generosity, her loving concern for others, and her willingness to expend herself in assisting those around her, even

cherished cats and dogs and extended that same kindness and care to the local wildlife she held dear.

Reflecting her generous spirit, Chris was passionately involved in fundraising for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation for many years and served as co-chair of the Grand Chefs Gala. She was also very active in her community, following in her father’s footsteps as president of the Gordon Beach Homeowners Association, and was a proud member of the Three Oaks Community Garden.

Chris loved to learn, and that love led her to search God’s Word, the Bible. After thoroughly studying the Scriptures, she was baptized as one of Jehovah’s Witnesses in 2015. She was a beloved member of the Three Oaks Congregation and actively volunteered in the ministry until her passing. Chris cherished the Bible’s promise of a global Paradise, where all humans and animals will live together in perfect harmony.

Chris was treasured by all who knew her and will be dearly missed by family and friends. She is survived by her sister, Kathy Jones of Oklahoma City, Okla.; her nephews: Micah (Melissa), Matt (Melody), Marcus (Morgan); six great-nephews and one great-niece.

She was preceded in death by her parents and many beloved pets.

Family and friends will gather at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 31, at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses, 7230 West Kruger Road, Three Oaks, MI 49128. The service will also be available via Zoom (<https://tinyurl.com/ChrisStevensMemorial>).

For those who wish to make memorial contributions, donations in Chris’s memory may be made to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation at www.cff.org, or the Michiana Humane Society at www.michianapets.org.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Wagner Family Funerals Pobocik Chapel, Three Oaks. Memories and condolences may be shared online at www.wagnercares.com.

Zackary P. Cowell

Dec. 5, 1975 – Jan. 16, 2026



Mummaw; survived by his mother, Debra (Alan) Waddell-Zavoral; mother- and father-in-law, Debra and Brian Mummaw; grandma, Ina Waddell; and grandmothers-in-law, Arlene Mummaw and Esther Florey. He is also survived by his siblings: Kyler (Natalie) Cowell, Toni Brooke Fryatt, and Cody (Melissa) Fryatt; sister-in-law, Jaclyn (Mason) Kadlec; honorary brother, Cory Piehl, and his beloved nieces and nephews: Ethan, Sean, Colton, Milo,

Zackary Patrick Lee Cowell, 50, of St. Joseph passed away unexpectedly of natural causes on Friday, Jan. 16, 2026.

Zack was born on Dec. 5, 1975, in Berrien Center. He attended school at Brandywine and Coloma. Following graduation, he began a lifelong career working alongside his father (Gil) at Cowell & Co. Zack’s dedication to his craft was evident to all who knew him; 19 years ago, he continued the family legacy by building his own company, with a reputation for excellence.

A man known for his deep

kindness, humility and genuine nature, Zack always looked out for others. He was a devoted sports fan, rarely missing a chance to cheer for his favorite teams – Notre Dame, the Cubs and the Bears. Above all, Zack cherished the time spent with his friends and family, creating memories that will be treasured forever.

Zack leaves behind a legacy of craftsmanship and devotion to those he loved.

He will be deeply missed by the love of his life, Kate

and Alice. Zack was reunited with his father, Gil Cowell, and his cherished truck dog, Oliver. Visitation will be held from 4-6 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 22, at Starks & Menchinger Chapel, 2650 Niles Road, St. Joseph. A celebration of life service will immediately follow the visitation. In honor of Zack’s love for animals, the family suggests memorial donations to the Humane Society of Southwestern Michigan. Those wishing to send a condolence online may do so at www.starks-menchingner.com.

Death notices

Zackary P. Cowell, 50, of St. Joseph died Jan. 16, 2026. Starks & Menchinger Chapel, Starks Family Funeral Home of St. Joseph, 556-9450.

Jerry D. Hunt, 77, died Dec. 3, 2025. Starks & Menchinger Chapel, Starks Family Funeral Home of St. Joseph, 556-9450.

Myrth M. Kremers, 85, of St. Joseph died Jan. 17, 2026, at home. Starks & Menchinger Chapel, Starks Family Funeral Home of St. Joseph, 556-9450.

Patricia Ann Nehrig, 84, of Stevensville died Jan. 19, 2026, at StoryPoint – St. Joseph. Starks & Menchinger Chapel, Starks Family Funeral Home of St. Joseph, 556-9450.

Katie Mae Cooper Powell, 86, of Benton Harbor died Jan. 4, 2026, at home. Robbins Brothers Funeral Home, Benton Harbor, 927-3181.

Gloriana Antonovich Siewert, 97, died Jan. 9, 2026, at Corewell Health Lakeland Hospital, St. Joseph. Starks & Menchinger Chapel, Starks Family Funeral Home of St. Joseph, 556-9450.

Christine Stevens, 74, of Union Pier died Jan. 4, 2026, at Corewell Health Merlin & Carolyn Hanson Hospice Center, Stevensville. Wagner Family Funerals, Pobocik Chapel, Three Oaks, 756-3831.

Robert White, 91, of Berrien Springs died Jan. 19, 2026, at home. Heritage Chapel, Starks Family Funeral Home, Berrien Springs, 471-2700.

Myrth M. Kremers

Sept. 12, 1940 – Jan. 17, 2026



Myrth M. Kremers, 85, passed away on Saturday, Jan. 17, 2026, at her home in St. Joseph. Family will receive guests from 10 a.m. until time of celebration of life service at 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 24, at Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, 1965 Broadway, Benton Harbor. Interment will be held privately in Kniebes Cemetery, Coloma.

Myrth was born Sept. 12, 1940, at home in Bainbridge Township to Carlyle and Carolyn Eber. She was married to her high school sweetheart, Bernard Kremers in 1961. They were blessed with two children: Kayleen (Hans) Stuhldreer and Karl (Susan) Kremers; four grandchildren: Erik (Tina) Kremers, Max Stuhldreer, Jakob (Andrea) Kremers and Elisabeth Stuhldreer; and two great-grandchildren: Theodore Kremers and Walter Kremers. She is also survived by her sister, Madelyn (Rodger) Huelsberg; her brother-in-law, Jerry Kremers; her nieces: Nina, Gwen, Koreen, Cherri, Cindy, Karen and Kathy; and her nephew, Shane.

She is preceded in death by her husband, Bernard; her sister-in-law, Patsy Kremers; her brother-in-law, Tom McCarthy; her niece, Carla; her nephew, Michael and her parents.

Myrth attended a two-room school in Bainbridge, graduated from Eau Claire High School and received her bachelor’s of music degree from Western Michigan Univer-

sity. She taught general and vocal music at Coloma schools, Michigan Lutheran High School and Lake Michigan College. She was very active for more than

50 years in the Monday Musical Club, holding many offices including president. She sang, soloed, and directed the St. Matthew’s Lutheran Church choir and the Monday Musical Chorus.

She also performed and soloed with the Southwestern Michigan Lutheran Chorale, the Southwestern Michigan Symphony Chorus, the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, the St. Joseph Municipal Band, the Cathedral Chorus of Benton Harbor, and the Twin Cities Lakeland Choral Society. In college, she was a member of the Honorary Music Fraternity, Sigma Alpha Iota and later became a member of the Kalamazoo SAI alumnae chapter.

Her two minutes of fame occurred when she was chosen to perform the National Anthem for a Chicago Cubs game on Labor Day weekend of 1988; a true thrill for her, as a die-hard Cubs fan.

Arrangements entrusted to Starks & Menchinger Chapel, St. Joseph, 556-9450. Online condolences can be left for the family at www.starks-menchingner.com.

Memorial contributions may be given to Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church at the address listed above, or to Michigan Lutheran High School, www.michiganlutheran.org/support-mlhs.

Trump’s Greenland threats test longtime NATO alliances

DAVOS, Switzerland (AP) — President Donald Trump’s pledge to provoke a sweeping tariff fight with Europe to get his way in taking control of Greenland has left many of America’s closest allies warning of a rupture with Washington that would shatter the NATO alliance that had once seemed unshakable.

The European Union’s top official on Tuesday called Trump’s planned new tariffs over Greenland a “mistake” and questioned Trump’s trustworthiness. French President Emmanuel Macron said the EU could retaliate against its long-standing ally by deploying one of its most powerful economic tools, known colloquially as a trade “bazooka.”

Trump prides himself on ratcheting up pressure to try and negotiate through a position of strength. He is slated to leave on Tuesday — the anniversary of his inauguration — for the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, a venue that could give him the chance to defuse tensions as quickly as he has sought to stir them up.

But European leaders — digging in and vowing to defend Denmark and its semiautonomous control over Greenland — may be seeking just as hard to meet an extraordinary moment with their own demonstration of fierce resolve.

That could hurt the chances of Trump finding a quick way to turn around the crisis. And, even as the furor over



Evgeniy Maloletka / AP

People protest against Trump’s policy towards Greenland in front of the U.S. consulate in Nuuk, Greenland, on Saturday.

Trump’s escalating calls for U.S. control of the vast Arctic island seems ready to engulf the elite annual meeting in Switzerland, Greenland’s

leader insisted on respect for its territorial integrity and said recognition of international law is “not a game.” European Commission

President Ursula von der Leyen pushed back against Trump’s announcement that, starting February, a 10 percent import tax will be imposed on goods from eight European nations that have rallied around NATO ally Denmark. Greenland is a semiautonomous territory of Denmark.

“The European Union and the United States have agreed to a trade deal last July,” von der Leyen said in Davos. “And in politics as in business — a deal is a deal. And when friends shake hands, it must mean something.”

“We consider the people of the United States not just our allies, but our friends. And plunging us into a downward spiral would only aid the very

adversaries we are both so committed to keeping out of the strategic landscape,” she added.

She vowed that the EU’s response “will be unflinching, united and proportional.”

The harder stance seemed to defy the approach that many European leaders have taken since Trump returned to office, which mostly had been to say nice things about Trump to try to stay in his good graces, while working furiously through other avenues to find compromise. The president’s continued insistence in recent weeks, however, that nothing short of the U.S. somehow owning Greenland being unacceptable, is testing the limits of the softer approach.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

25 years ago – 2001
Children at Calvin Britain Elementary School in Benton Harbor will be among the first to take part in a new national children’s literacy program, the Carpet One Magic Carpet Time Tour. Developed with the help of elementary-level reading specialists, the tour combines creative storytelling with interactive, education based theater.

35 years ago – 1991
You may take a second look when entering the state’s Travel Information Center on I-94 near New Buffalo. The state recently completed a new \$1.5 million center to replace the one built in 1972. Betsy Brandt, director of the travel information center, said the new center is two and a half times the size of the old building.

50 years ago – 1976
Marijuana and other drugs with an estimated street value of \$62,000 went up in smoke Tuesday during the burning of confiscated substances in an incinerator at the Berrien County Courthouse. Burned were about 200 pounds of marijuana and a plastic garbage bag of heroin, cocaine and other controlled substances.

TODAY IN HISTORY

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Today is Wednesday, Jan. 21, the 21st day of 2026. There are 344 days left in the year.

Highlight in history:
On Jan. 21, 2020, the U.S. reported its first known case of the 2019 novel coronavirus circulating in China, saying a Washington state resident who had returned the previous week from the outbreak’s epicenter was hospitalized near Seattle.

Also on this date:
In 1793, during the French Revolution, King Louis XVI, condemned for treason, was executed by guillotine.

In 1861, Jefferson Davis of Mississippi, with a dramatic farewell speech, resigned his U.S. Senate seat after his state and others seceded from the Union. He would later be elected president of the Confederacy shortly before the Civil War began.

In 1924, Russian revolutionary Vladimir Lenin died at age 53, setting off a bloody power struggle that would lead to the rise of Soviet dictator Josef Stalin.

In 1950, former State Department official Alger Hiss, accused of being part of a Communist spy ring, was found guilty in New York of lying to a grand jury. (Hiss, who proclaimed his innocence, served less than four years in prison.)

In 1960, the collapse of a mine in Coalbrook, South Africa, killed 437 miners.

In 1976, British Airways and Air France inaugurated scheduled passenger service on the supersonic Concorde jet.

In 1977, on his first full day in office, President Jimmy Carter pardoned almost all Vietnam War draft evaders.

In 1985, Galaxy Airlines Flight 203 crashed in a field shortly after takeoff from Reno, Nevada, killing all but one of the 71 people aboard. The survivor was a 17-year-old boy who was thrown clear of the aircraft and found conscious and still in his seat.

5-Day Forecast for St. Joseph

Today	Tonight	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
					
Snow Likely	Snow Likely	Scattered Snow	Scattered Snow	Isolated Snow	Scattered Snow
32°	17°	24° / 4°	11° / 1°	10° / 4°	19° / 10°

Local Outlook

Today we will see cloudy skies with a 75% chance of snow, high temperature of 32°, humidity of 73%. Southwest wind 15 mph. New snow accumulation between four to five inches possible. Expect mostly cloudy skies tonight with a 75% chance of snow, overnight low of 17°.

Local Almanac

Benton Harbor Yesterday

High	21°
Low	0°
Normal High	34°
Normal Low	18°
Record High	59° in 1999
Record Low	-4° in 2008

Precipitation

Yesterday	0.00"
Month to date	0.29"
Normal for month	1.09"
Year to date	0.29"
Normal Year to date	1.09"

Sun and Moon

Sunrise 8:08 a.m.
Sunset 5:46 p.m.
Moonrise 9:45 a.m.
Moonset 8:59 p.m.

First 1/25 Full 2/1 Last 2/9 New 2/17

Air Quality

Yesterday 12
Main Offender Particulates

The higher the number, the greater the need for people with respiratory problems to reduce outside activity.

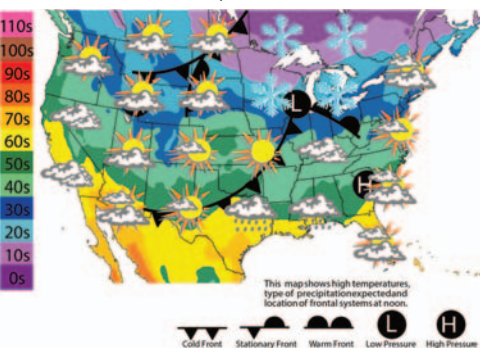
0-50	Good
51-100	Moderate
101-150	Sensitive
151-200	Unhealthy

Regional Map



National Weather Map

Forecast map for Jan. 21, 2026



For latest weather updates: www.wxto go.com/HP

Lake Michigan

Today, SSW wind 18 to 20 kt. Snow showers likely. Waves 3 to 5 ft. Water temperature 38 degrees. Tonight, W wind 20 to 25 kt, with gusts as high as 33 kt. Snow showers likely.

Michigan Forecast

Upper Peninsula
Today, skies will be cloudy with widespread snow showers, highs in the 10s and 20s. South southwest wind 5 to 8 mph. Expect mostly cloudy skies Thursday with isolated snow showers, highs in the single digits and 10s. West wind 13 to 17 mph.

Lower Peninsula
Today, skies will be cloudy with widespread snow, highs in the 30s. Southwest wind 15 mph. Expect mostly cloudy skies Thursday with scattered snow, highs in the 20s. West wind 14 to 17 mph.

ICE

From page A1

the immigration enforcement and removal operation that has been a cornerstone of his domestic and foreign policy agenda is rapidly transforming into something else – a national law enforcement presence with billions upon billions of dollars in new spending from U.S. taxpayers.

The shooting death of Renee Good in Minneapolis showed the alarming reach of the new federalized force, sparking unrelenting protests against the military-styled officers seen going door to door to find and detain immigrants. Amid the outpouring of opposition, Trump revived threats to invoke the Insurrection Act to quell the demonstrations and the U.S. Army has 1,500 soldiers ready to deploy.

But Trump’s own public approval rating on immigration, one of his signature issues, has slipped since he took office, according to an AP-NORC poll.

“Public sentiment is everything,” said Rep. Nydia M. Velázquez, D-N.Y., at a press conference at the Capitol with lawmakers supporting legislation to impeach Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem. Americans, she said, are upset at what they are seeing. “They didn’t sign on for this,” she said.

Border crossings down, but Americans confront new ICE enforcements

To be sure, illegal crossings into the U.S. at the Mexico border have fallen to historic lows under Trump, a remarkable shift from just a few years ago when President Joe Biden’s Democratic administration allowed millions of people to temporarily enter the U.S. as they adjudicated their claims to stay.

Yet as enforcement moves away from the border, the newly hired army of immigration officers swarming city streets with aggressive tactics – in Los Angeles, Chicago and elsewhere – is something not normally seen in the U.S.

Armed and masked law enforcement officers are being witnessed smashing car windows, yanking people from vehicles and chasing and wrestling others to the ground and hauling them away – images playing out in endless loops on TVs and other screens.

And it’s not just ICE. A long list of supporting agencies, including federal, state and local police and sheriff’s offices, are entering into contract partnerships with Homeland Security to conduct immigra-



Yuki Iwamura / AP

ICE agents make use of the facilities at a gas station Monday in St. Paul, Minn.

tion enforcement operations in communities around the nation.

House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., has warned Democrats that this is “no time to be playing games” by stirring up the opposition to immigration enforcement officers in Minneapolis and other places.

“They need to get out of the way and allow federal law enforcement to do its duty,” Johnson said at the Capitol.

Noem has said the immigration enforcement officers are acting lawfully. The department insists it’s targeting criminals in the actions, what officials call the worst of the worst immigrants.

However, reports show that non-criminals and U.S. citizens are also being forcibly detained by immigration officers. The Supreme Court last year lifted a ban on using race alone in the immigration stops.

Trump last month called Somali immigrants “garbage,” comments that echoed his past objections to immigrants from certain countries.

The Trump administration has set a goal of 100,000 detentions a day, about three times what’s typical, with 1 million deportations a year.

Money from the big bill flows with few restraints

With Republican control of Congress, the impeachment of Noem or any other Trump official is not a viable political option for Democrats, who would not appear to have the vote tally even among their own ranks.

In fact, even if Congress wanted to curtail Trump’s immigration operations – by threatening to shut down the government, for example – it would be difficult to stop the spend.

What Trump called the “big, beautiful bill” is essentially on autopilot through 2029, the year he’s scheduled to finish his term and leave office.

The legislation essentially doubled annual Homeland Security funding, adding \$170 billion to be used over four years. Of that, ICE, which typically receives about \$10 billion a year, was provided \$30 billion for operations and \$45 billion for detention facilities.

“The first thing that comes to mind is spending on this level is typically done on the military,” said Kathleen Bush-Joseph, a policy analyst at the Migration Policy Institute. “Trump is militarizing immigration enforcement.”

Ahead, Congress will consider a routine annual funding package for Homeland Security unveiled Tuesday, or risk a partial shutdown Jan. 30. A growing group of Democratic senators and the Congressional Progressive Caucus have had enough. They say they won’t support additional funds without significant changes.

Lawmakers are considering various restrictions on ICE operations, including limiting arrests around hospitals, courthouses, churches and other sensitive locations and ensuring that officers display proper identification and refrain from wearing face masks.

“I think ICE needs to be totally torn down,” said Sen. Ruben Gallego, D-Ariz., on CNN over the weekend.

“People want immigration enforcement that goes after criminals,” he said. And not what he called this “goon squad.”

Big spending underway, but Trump falls short of goals

Meanwhile, Homeland Security has begun tapping the new money at its disposal. The department informed Congress it has obligated roughly \$58 billion – most of that, some \$37 billion, for border wall construction, according to a person familiar with the private assessment but unauthorized to discuss it.

The Department of Homeland Security said its massive recruitment campaign blew past its 10,000-person target to bring in 12,000 new hires, more than doubling the force to 22,000 officers, in a matter of months.

Police search for suspect in shooting of Tippecanoe County judge and his wife

LAFAYETTE (AP) — An Indiana state court judge and his wife were in stable condition Monday as authorities continued to search for suspects who shot the couple the day before at their Lafayette home.

Steven Meyer, a Tippecanoe Superior Court judge, suffered an injury to his arm and his wife, Kimberly Meyer, had a hip injury from the attack, authorities said.

Officers responded Sunday afternoon to a report of a shooting in the residential area about 60 miles northwest of Indianapolis to find the couple injured.

They were treated for their wounds, and officers recovered shell casings from the scene.

Lafayette Police said the investigation remains active and involves local, state and federal agencies. They have not released a motive or suspect description.

HOME GATING GUIDE

Fan-favorite recipes for the big watch party!

CALLING ALL FOODIES!

Do you have a “GAME DAY” recipe you are really proud of?

Share it with the community!

Upload your best “Game Day” recipe at the link on our website starting January 19. Starting January 26, the community will vote on the tastiest looking recipe.

The top three recipes will be published in The Herald-Palladium on February 4 & 7 before the Big Game!

Click the Contests link at www.TheHP.com and choose the Homegating Recipe Contest to upload your tastiest dish!

Thank You to Our Sponsors









hpSPORTS

Aloha feels more like goodbye for Sony Open

LA QUINTA, Calif. — Palm trees are about the only similarity between the Sony Open and The American Express, consecutive weeks on the PGA Tour where one course is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean and the other by mountains and desert.

Doug Ferguson
On the Fringe



And now they share something else in common: an uncertain future. That's true about most things this year as the PGA Tour moves toward an overhaul of the schedule for 2027 (at the earliest). It most likely will look nothing like it has except for the Masters being the first full week of April and the U.S. Open ending on Father's Day.

Aloha can mean hello or goodbye, and there was a tangible vibe of the latter at the Sony Open even without Chris Gotterup saying after his two-shot victory, "Hopefully, I'm not the last champion."

The Sentry at Kapalua was canceled amid a water dispute in Maui now caught up in lawsuits that probably won't be heard until 2027, well after the Future Competition Committee wraps up its work on a new schedule.

Wisconsin-based Sentry has a title sponsorship contract through 2035 and no one would be surprised to see it associated with another tournament. This is the last year of Farmers Insurance as the title sponsor at Torrey Pines, a tournament that dates to 1952 and has been at Torrey since 1968, a year before the modern PGA Tour began.

There's a lot of moving parts.

"It definitely felt like last week was the last time in Hawaii, which was disappointing because I grew up in North Dakota, live in Texas now, and Hawaii was a great place to go for two weeks to start off the year," Tom Hoge said. "I'm going to miss those trips."

He was on the practice range Monday at PGA West, and there was no guarantee he would be returning to The American Express next year through no choice of his own. Adam Scott is playing for the first time. As it relates to so much uncertainty, he added with a laugh, "Maybe the last time."

Everything is in play. Is any tournament that's not a \$20 million signature event safe?

"I have no idea how it's going to work," Hoge said in California, echoing the comments of Tommy Fleetwood, who was 12 time zones away in Dubai ("Where the schedule goes and where the tour goes, I don't know," Fleetwood said).

Brian Rolapp, the CEO of the PGA Tour who speaks of changes more significant than incremental, has not ruled out starting a new season after the Super Bowl. He has talked about scarcity, simplicity and parity. Golf only has parity.

"Competing with football in this country for media dollars and



PMG file photo

Mark Frey guided the Buchanan football team to a 41-27 record and five playoff appearances over seven seasons.

Frey to lead Lancers

Lakeshore hires Buchanan coach to lead football program

By **MAXWELL HARDEN**
Paxton Media Group

BUCHANAN — The Lakeshore football program announced Mark Frey as its new head coach Tuesday. Frey joins the Lancers after seven seasons leading the Buchanan Bucks.

Frey will look to build on a proud tradition of Lakeshore football that has compiled 27 playoff appearances, 19 conference championships, 10 district championships, five regional championships and five state semifinal appearances.

"It is a privilege to lead a program with such a storied history as Lakeshore High School," Frey said. "Our goal is to honor the legacy of those who came before us while pushing the program and our student-athletes to their maximum potential. We will compete at the highest level, on and off the field, and I cannot wait to get started with our student-athletes."

Before coaching at Buchanan, he served as the head coach for five seasons at Riverdale High School in Ohio. Coach Frey also coached the wide receivers, tight ends, secondary, and

kickers at Ohio Northern University from 2013-2014; cornerbacks, kickers and punters at Dordt College from 2012-2013; and cornerbacks, kickers and tight ends at Concord High School in Indiana from 2011-2012.

While at Buchanan, Frey guided the Bucks to a 41-27 record, five playoff appearances and three conference championships while attaining a 100 percent graduation rate for players that played four years in the football program.

His teams were named academic all-state five times and finished top four in the state once. For his efforts, Frey was voted the MHSFCA Region Coach of the Year in 2020 and 2022 and grew the program from 27 players to over 60 players.

During his tenure, Buchanan beat archrival Brandywine six out of eight times.

"I feel truly blessed to have served as Head Football Coach at Buchanan High School over the past seven years," Frey said. "I can say that not only did we transform Buchanan Football, but this school transformed my career and for that I will forever be grateful."

During his coaching career, Frey has developed 102 all-conference players, 25 all-region players, seven all-state players, six DI/DII scholarship players, 23 academic all-state players, developed a secondary that finished 10th in the nation in interceptions at Ohio Northern University in 2013 and de-

veloped second-round NFL draft pick Jason Springs.

"Mark impressed us with his extensive experience and his ability to create a culture focused on preparation, confidence and high character," said Lakeshore Athletic Director Greg Younger. "We are very excited to welcome him and his family to Lakeshore. He has a proven track record with a vast array of experience that he will bring to our program and will be able to hit the ground running."

Frey thanked the Buchanan community for their support over the past seven years.

"To our past and present players, it has been the joy of a lifetime to coach you," he said. "Thank you for giving everything you have, both on the field and in the classroom. To the coaches who dedicated countless hours to our players and our program, nothing we achieved could have been done without you."

"I am also grateful for the support of our Superintendent, Patricia Robinson; Our Principal, Brian Pruett; our School Board and the entire Buchanan community. To the parents, fans, cheerleaders and band who fill the stadium and make Friday Night Lights a tradition unlike any other thank you. I know this team is set up for another successful year ahead and I look forward to following you all, as I will always have a special place in my heart for the Bucks."

Cignetti completes picture, coaching Indiana to title

By **ALANIS THAMES**
Associated Press

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. — Curt Cignetti came to Indiana to win championships.

The old-school, blunt-spoken coach who began his Hoosiers tenure with a promise to bring swift success to the losingest program in college football completed his masterpiece on Monday night, guiding Indiana to a 27-21 win over Miami in the College Football Playoff final and the first national championship in school history.

Cignetti accomplished what few imagined could be done — at least not this quickly. But after taking advantage of the transfer portal and name, image and likeness money to build a championship roster, Cignetti coached the Hoosiers to their first No. 1 ranking, and they finished off an undefeated campaign in front of 67,227 fans at Hard Rock Stadium, concluding one of the most surprising turnarounds in college football history.

Cignetti — who began his head coaching career at Division II Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 2011 — became the first head coach to win a national title in his first or second season with a team since Gene Chizik led Auburn to the championship in 2010.

"What's this moment like for me?" Cignetti said. "Back when I was waxing the staff table at IUP Thanksgiving weekend and the school was shut down for the playoffs ... Did I ever think something like this was possible? Probably not. If you keep your nose down in life and keep working, anything is possible."

Cignetti kept working and kept winning through stints at Elon and James Madison before he made the leap to the Big Ten and dismissed skeptics by saying, "I win. Google me."

Indiana had never won more than nine games in a season before Cignetti's arrival two years ago, and in 2022 became the first Bowl Subdivision program to reach 700 losses.

Now the Hoosiers have double-digit wins in two straight years.

Cignetti brought 13 players from JMU to Indiana and saw the potential in Mendoza, who transferred from California.

"Coach Cig changed my life," said standout line-backer Aiden Fisher, who followed Cignetti from JMU. "From a kid that felt like I was under-recruited, that I deserved more attention than I got. ... The amount of confidence he built in me, the trust and belief he had in me — I mean, why would you leave that? When a coach cares that much about you and sees so much for your future. He's talked about development and growth for me all the time. It was a no-brainer. I owe a lot to him. He's an unbelievable coach, but he's an unbelievable person."



CIGNETTI

Williams, Bears see bigger things in future

By **ANDREW SELIGMAN**
Associated Press

LAKE FOREST, Ill. — There were all sorts of thoughts running through Caleb Williams' mind as he drove home after the Chicago Bears' gut-wrenching playoff exit.

One thing that jarred him was the realization that instead of reviewing video on Monday, he and his teammates would be clearing out their lockers. Williams also felt a strong sense of gratitude in the wake of the Bears' 20-17 overtime loss to the Los Angeles Rams in the divisional round on Sunday night.

"To bring life, to bring joy, to bring excitement, to being a Chicago Bears fan, to be able to cheer for us," Williams said Monday. "I do take pride in it. It's really cool, honestly, to be able to have those small things like that. Just being able to have the city behind you. You lose that game, you're walking out of the game and the fans stand up and cheer and roar in a tough moment. It goes a long way."

The Bears came a long way under first-year coach Ben Johnson. They went 11-6 and won their first NFC North title since 2018 after finishing last a year ago and advanced in the playoffs for the first time in 15 years. Along the way, they provided plenty of thrills.

Chicago pulled out an NFL-record seven wins when trailing in the final two minutes of regulation, including a thriller against Green Bay in the wildcard round. And on Sunday, it looked like the Bears might have one more rally in them.

Williams made an incredible touchdown throw in the closing seconds of regulation. But on his last pass of the game, a miscommunication with DJ Moore led to an interception. Matthew Stafford then drove the Rams into posi-



Jeff Roberson / AP

Chicago Bears safety Kevin Byard III, left, is unable to intercept a pass intended for Los Angeles Rams tight end Terrance Ferguson (18) during the first half of Sunday's game.

tion for the winning field goal.

Instead of preparing for a trip to Seattle for the NFC championship game, Chicago turns its attention toward the offseason. The Bears are in a far better place than they were a year ago.

Williams looks to improve his accuracy

Williams made big strides in his second season and first in Johnson's system, passing for a franchise-record 3,942 yards with 27 touchdowns and seven interceptions. His accuracy remains an issue, and that's something he plans to address in the offseason.

Williams completed 58.1 percent of his passes and ranked 24th among qualifying players. The only other quarterback below 60 percent was Tennessee's Cam Ward at 59.8 percent.

"Was I too far forward? Was I too far back?" Williams said. "Was I not consistent enough with my footwork and

did I lean off and fall off the mound, is what we call it? Things like that."

Bears are set along the offensive line

The Bears don't have to worry about their offensive line this offseason. That's a big change from recent years.

General manager Ryan Poles rebuilt the interior of the line by trading for guards Joe Thuney and Jonah Jackson and signing center Drew Dalman. He also drafted Ozzy Trapilo in the second round.

Thuney, acquired from Kansas City, was first-team All-Pro for the third time. Dalman earned his first Pro Bowl selection. Jackson started every game, and Trapilo emerged as the starting left tackle during the season. With Darnell Wright, a second-team All-Pro, at right tackle, the Bears' line was one of the

Sinner’s bid for Australian Open three-peat begins

By JOHN PYE
Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Two sets and just over an hour of tennis wasn’t what Jannik Sinner wanted at Rod Laver Arena for the start of his bid for an Australian Open three-peat.

In his first competitive match since beating Carlos Alcaraz at the ATP Finals in November, Sinner was leading 6-2, 6-1 when No. 93-ranked Hugo Gaston suddenly retired from their match Tuesday night with an undisclosed injury.

“I saw that he was not serving with a very high pace,” Sinner said, but “it’s not the way you want to

win the match.”

After signaling he had to quit, Gaston went to a courtside chair and bowed his head into his hands. Sinner went to console him, putting a hand on the Frenchman’s shoulder and wishing him a speedy recovery.

For Sinner, it was an anticlimactic return to Melbourne Park’s main arena 12 months after clinching back-to-back Australian titles with a win over Alexander Zverev in the final.

He played Alcaraz in the finals of the other three majors, winning at Wimbledon and finishing runner-up at Roland Garros and the U.S. Open, as the so-called Sincar-

az rivals extended their dominance of Grand Slam tournaments to a second full year.

Sinner isn’t content with evenly splitting the titles with Alcaraz, though. He used his time off to concentrate on adjusting his service motion and tweaking other parts of his game in the search for incremental improvements.

“I’ve put in many, many long days in the off-season trying to become a better tennis player,” No. 2-ranked Sinner said. “But at the end of the day the most important part is to go on court and to enjoy, no? It’s very special to start the season in a night session match here in a Grand Slam, the packed stadium,

just trying to do your best.”

Sinner is aiming to become the fourth player to win three consecutive men’s titles at the Australian Open.

Osaka’s fashion statement

Wearing a wide-brim hat, veil and holding a white parasol as she walked onto Rod Laver Arena for the last night match, Naomi Osaka made a grand entrance.

The four-time major winner went on to beat Antonia Ruzic 6-3, 3-6, 6-4, and later explained the inspiration for her design.

“It’s modeled after a jellyfish,” Osaka said. “I’m just so grateful I get to do the things I love.”

Keys opener

Madison Keys had a tough start to her title defense, struggling early against the offbeat style of Oleksandra Oliynykova before advancing 7-6 (6), 6-1.

Ninth-seeded Keys, playing in her 50th Grand Slam tournament, trailed 4-0 before finding her rhythm.

“Obviously I was very nervous at the start,” Keys said. “As nervous as I was . . . I’m really glad to be back, and that I got through that match.”

Oliynykova’s unorthodox shot-making and strong defense kept Keys off balance in the first set.

SCOREBOARD

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	26	16	.619	—
New York	25	18	.581	1½
Toronto	25	19	.568	2
Philadelphia	23	18	.561	2½
Brooklyn	12	29	.293	13½

Southeast Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Orlando	23	19	.548	—
Miami	22	21	.512	1½
Atlanta	20	25	.444	4½
Charlotte	16	27	.372	7½
Washington	10	32	.238	13

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Detroit	31	10	.756	—
Cleveland	24	20	.545	8½
Chicago	20	22	.476	11½
Milwaukee	18	24	.429	13½
Indiana	10	34	.227	22½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	30	13	.698	—
Houston	25	15	.625	3½
Memphis	18	23	.439	11
Dallas	18	26	.409	12½
New Orleans	10	35	.222	21

Northwest Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Oklahoma City	36	8	.818	—
Denver	29	14	.678	6½
Minnesota	27	16	.624	8½
Portland	22	22	.500	14
Utah	14	29	.326	21½

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Lakers	25	16	.610	—
Phoenix	26	17	.605	—
Golden State	19	19	.568	1½
L.A. Clippers	25	23	.526	6½
Sacramento	12	31	.279	14

Monday’s Games

Milwaukee 112, Atlanta 110
Oklahoma City 136, Cleveland 104
L.A. Clippers 110, Washington 106
San Antonio 123, Utah 110
Dallas 114, New York 97
Phila. 113, Indiana 104
Phoenix 126, Brooklyn 117
Detroit 104, Boston 103
Golden State 135, Miami 112

Wednesday’s Games

Cleveland at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Brooklyn at New York, 7:30 p.m.
Indiana at Boston, 7:30 p.m.
Atlanta at Memphis, 8 p.m.
Detroit at New Orleans, 8 p.m.
Oklahoma City at Milwaukee, 9:30 p.m.
Toronto at Sacramento, 10 p.m.

Thursday’s Games

Charlotte at Orlando, 7 p.m.
Denver at Washington, 7 p.m.
Houston at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Golden State at Dallas, 7:30 p.m.
Chicago at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
San Antonio at Utah, 9 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at L.A. Clippers, 10 p.m.
Miami at Portland, 10 p.m.

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Tampa Bay	47	30	13	4	64	166	120
Detroit	50	30	16	4	64	157	153
Montreal	49	27	15	7	61	168	164
Boston	49	28	19	2	58	164	150
Buffalo	48	26	17	5	57	158	150
Toronto	49	24	17	8	56	165	164
Florida	48	25	20	3	53	146	160
Ottawa	48	22	19	7	51	159	163

Metropolitan Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Carolina	50	31	15	4	66	173	145
N.Y. Islanders	49	27	17	5	59	145	137
Pittsburgh	48	23	14	11	57	156	147
Philadelphia	48	23	17	8	54	143	150
Washington	50	24	20	6	54	159	148
New Jersey	49	25	22	2	52	129	150
Columbus	48	22	19	7	51	148	160
N.Y. Rangers	50	21	23	6	48	135	155

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Central Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Colorado	47	34	5	8	76	190	112
Minnesota	50	28	13	9	65	161	143
Dallas	49	27	13	9	63	163	139
Utah	49	25	20	4	54	153	135
Nashville	48	23	21	4	50	138	161
Chicago	49	20	22	7	47	135	154
St. Louis	49	19	22	8	46	120	168
Winnipeg	48	19	23	6	44	144	150

Pacific Division

	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Vegas	48	24	12	12	60	161	147
Edmonton	50	25	17	8	58	170	158
San Jose	48	25	20	3	53	152	169
Anaheim	49	25	21	3	53	163	175
Seattle	48	21	18	9	51	133	147
Los Angeles	48	19	16	13	51	125	136
Calgary	49	21	23	5	47	127	145
Vancouver	49	16	28	5	37	129	180

Monday’s Games

Carolina 2, Buffalo 1
Colorado 5, Washington 2
Pittsburgh 6, Seattle 3
San Jose 4, Florida 1
Minnesota 6, Toronto 3
Philadelphia 2, Vegas 1
Chicago 2, Winnipeg 0
New Jersey 2, Calgary 1, OT
N.Y. Islanders 4, Vancouver 3

Wednesday’s Games

Detroit at Toronto, 7 p.m.
Anaheim at Colorado, 9 p.m.
Philadelphia at Utah, 9 p.m.
N.Y. Islanders at Seattle, 9:30 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Calgary, 9:30 p.m.
Washington at Vancouver, 10 p.m.

Thursday’s Games

Buffalo at Montreal, 7 p.m.
Chicago at Carolina, 7 p.m.
Dallas at Columbus, 7 p.m.
Vegas at Boston, 7 p.m.
Florida at Winnipeg, 8 p.m.
Ottawa at Nashville, 8 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Edmonton, 9 p.m.
Detroit at Minnesota, 9:30 p.m.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Jan. 19

National Championship Game

No. 1 Indiana 27, No. 10 Miami 21

The AP Top 25

The Top 25 teams in The Associated Press college football poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records through Jan. 19, total points based on 25 points for a first-place vote through one point for a 25th-place vote, and previous ranking.

	Record	Pts	Prv
1. Indiana (66)	16-0	1650	1
2. Miami (Fla.)	13-3	1584	10
3. Mississippi	13-2	1492	6
4. Oregon	13-2	1429	5
5. Ohio St.	12-2	1378	3
6. Georgia	12-2	1364	2
7. Texas Tech	12-2	1232	4
8. Texas A&M	11-2	1167	7
9. Alabama	11-4	1065	11
10. Notre Dame	10-2	1049	9
11. BYU	12-2	961	12
12. Texas	10-3	952	14
13. Oklahoma	10-3	941	8
14. Utah	11-2	812	15
15. Vanderbilt	10-3	623	13
16. Virginia	11-3	603	20
17. Iowa	9-4	430	-
18. Tulane	11-3	404	17
19. James Madison	12-2	399	19
20. Southern Cal	9-4	378	16
21. Michigan	9-4	276	18
22. Houston	10-3	270	-
23. Navy	11-2	227	22
24. North Texas	12-2	191	23
25. TCU	9-4	125	-

Others receiving votes: Illinois 123, Washington 76, SMU 69, Duke 58, Arizona 54, Georgia Tech 44, Tennessee 10, Missouri 8, Louisville 7, Louisville 3, W. Michigan 2, Wake Forest 2, Hawaii 1, Boise St. 1

FERGUSON

From page B1

attention is a really hard thing to do,” Rolapp said during a CNBC forum in November.

The NFL is contemplating adding a game. The PGA Tour is looking to reduce tournaments.

There has been chatter about roughly 20 tournaments for the A-listers, all of them strong fields and big purses, woven together in a schedule that is meaningful and makes sense. It’s clear that some tournaments, no matter their history, won’t be coming back in a place they once were.

“I did think about it once I heard if a 20-tournament season was a potential thing,” Matt Kuchar said. “Which ones might not survive? There’s certainly been talk about Hawaii events going away. This could be the last year for the Sony Open if Hawaii doesn’t make the cut. That’s a real shame.”

Sony’s sponsorship contract ended this year. By all accounts, the company is ready to renew except that it doesn’t have a date because no one knows what 2027

will look like.

American Express has a deal through 2028. It has given the old Bob Hope Classic a big boost since taking over in 2020 and this year has its strongest field in years. The tournament dates to 1960. Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus combined for three wins in the first four years.

Where does it fit into the schedule if the season doesn’t start until the week after (or before) the Super Bowl? The final round Sunday is up against the NFL’s conference championships.

“You do that a little bit,” Harris English said about wondering if a tournament will return. “This is my 15th year on tour and there’s more gratitude of like, ‘What if this is my last time playing The American Express, or my last time playing Torrey Pines?’”

“I’ve played the Sony Open 13 times, I’ve played this 10 or 11 times,” he said. “You get used to coming to places, seeing a lot of the same people, eating at the same restaurants. You feel like a little bit of a local.”

English played 27 times as a rookie in 2012. Five of those tournaments no longer

exist, two of them in the fall (Las Vegas and Disney), one of them a FedEx Cup playoff event in New York. Change is nothing new.

Players are now equity owners in the PGA Tour and most understand and accept the need to change. Still, there’s some nostalgia wrapped into the opening two weeks of the season, and more to come. The tour is looking at market size, crowd size and the financial value. It wants every tournament to mean something.

The tour also added two new events for the fall (a third one, Mexico, moved to the fall), which only adds to the mystery how it will shake out.

What gets cut? What gets moved? What becomes less important? These are tough questions on paper, tougher still for those who played in them.

“Everywhere we go, they have that golf course in the best shape it can be in,” Hoge said. “They roll out the red carpet for us. Every week is incredible out there.”

On The Fringe analyzes the biggest topics in golf during the season. Doug Ferguson covers golf for The Associated Press.

BEARS

From page B1

league’s best.

All five players are under contract for next year.

“We just had exit interviews – like you talk to the coaches and you have a clear view of, here are my deficiencies, here’s what needs to get better and what do we need to do as a group better,” Dalman said. “And so I think when you have all those guys that experienced those mistakes together in the past, it makes it all the more like poignant next year when we’re trying to address them.”

Improving defensive line could be a focus

The Bears could use some

help up front on defense. They were prone to giving up long drives, and when it came to taking down the quarterback, they were near the bottom of the NFL. With 35 sacks, they finished in a five-way tie for 22nd place.

Turnover at safety?

Safeties Kevin Byard and Jaquan Brisker are on expiring contracts. The 32-year-old Byard said he “would love” to re-sign with the Bears, with his two-year contract set to expire following one of his best seasons.

He earned his third first-team All-Pro selection while leading the NFL in interceptions for the second time in his career. He picked off seven passes, one shy of his career high with Tennessee in 2017.

Byard said he wanted to

prove he was still an elite player when he signed with Chicago after being released by Philadelphia. He played a huge role in the Bears leading the league in interceptions (23), takeaways (33) and turnover differential (plus-22).

“I really enjoyed this season and I would love to be back,” he said.

Brisker stayed healthy in his fourth season, playing a career-high 17 games after missing the final 12 in 2024 due to a concussion. He had a sack and two passes defended against Los Angeles.

Next steps

The Bears are bullish on their future. They believe they have the right coach and quarterback, and they can now entice free agents to join a winner.

HOMETOWN HEROES

The Herald-Palladium will recognize exceptional results by local youth and recreational groups. Photos must be in focus and every person in the photo must be identified for publication. Teams are limited to one appearance a season and/or calendar year.



Photo provided
Jonas Nycum of Kalamazoo won the 3-point contest at the 19th Annual St. Joseph Lions Club Middle School Basketball Tournament, held this past Saturday at St. Joseph High School.



Photo provided
The Berrien Springs 8th grade boys basketball team won the Big Ten Division of the 19th Annual St. Joseph Lions Club Middle School Basketball Tournament, held this past Saturday at St. Joseph High School. Front row, left: coach Devonte Jones, Emmett Muhlbradt, TK Barnes, Karter Smith, Deondre McDowell, coach Hector Vazquez. Back row, left: coach Jon Rospierski, Seeley Morton, Chris Jones, Thomas Woodson, Knox Jacob, Delondre Fisher.



Photo provided
The Niles 8th grade boys basketball team won the SEC Division of the 19th Annual St. Joseph Lions Club Middle School Basketball Tournament, held this past Saturday at St. Joseph High School. Front row, left: Graham Beckman, Branch Hood, Nolan Recker, Caleb Carrington, Adrian McCarey. Back row, left: Peyton Townsley, Jamarion Long, Bo Balos, Cameron Deming, Javon Thomas, Donell Blakemore, Lakelon Russell. Coaches are Staci Balos and Derrick Balos.



Photo provided
The St. Joseph 7th grade boys basketball team won the Big 12 Division of the 19th Annual St. Joseph Lions Club Middle School Basketball Tournament, held this past Saturday at St. Joseph High School. Front row, left: Rory McElvogue, Landyn Bush, Derek Valenti. Back row, left: coach Scott Bush, Jackson Lomonaco, Charlie Cole, Ethan Reithmeir, Kadin Munoz, coach Dan Valenti.



Photo provided
The Saline 6th grade boys basketball team won the MAC Division of the 19th Annual St. Joseph Lions Club Middle School Basketball Tournament, held this past Saturday at St. Joseph High School. Front row, left: Jackson Reynold, Vincent Huber, Gabe Schaeffer, Nathan Burke, Dawson Brown, Connor Greene. Back row, left: coach Chris Burke, Michael Franks, Ian Bowersox, Cam Allering, coach Karen Bowersox, coach Seth Greene.

Old friend has ghosted, should she still get a birthday party invite?

DEAR ERIC: I became friends with one of my oldest and closest friends when we were 9 years old.

In the last three years, it has been nearly impossible to see her. I routinely sent her text messages and voicemails asking if she wanted to get together. I finally resorted to sending her a message on Facebook.

R. Eric Thomas
Asking Eric



I was very surprised with her response that came several days later. She said that I had not responded to a text a few years ago when she asked if we could get dinner and didn't think that I valued her friendship, and therefore she wasn't going to put energy into it, because it was very painful for her.

I was baffled, sent her screenshots of my text messages asking when we could get together, call logs of unanswered and unreturned phone calls, invitations to events she didn't respond to, and apologized if she felt that I had not prioritized her as a friend. She never responded.

On her 40th birthday, I sent her a brief text message wishing her a joyful year ahead and said that I knew things were uneasy between us and I would really love a chance to sit down together and have a conversation to repair the friendship. She has not responded. Friends are beginning to plan my 40th birthday celebration and I have opted not to include her as a guest, out of respect for her feelings.

My husband feels that this is profoundly the wrong thing to do, and that if anything, I should send her the invitation and give her a phone call letting her know that I would really appreciate the chance to get together.

What is the right thing to do in this situation? — Broken Friendship

DEAR FRIENDSHIP: The safest thing is to invite her to the party. But the safe bet may not be the best bet for you. You've reached out multiple times in various forms and also apologized for something that seems more like a narrative she invented.

It's normal for friendships to experience different seasons, especially as the complications of raising children, work and distance make time scarcer. It seems she's being awfully ungenerous to you.

If you invite her to your 40th, you may be setting yourself up for another disappointment. Whereas, if you and your friend are able to reconnect at another time, she can join you at future birthdays, without the tension hanging over everything.

DEAR ERIC: I am 66 and live by myself. I feel so alone. I took care of my husband for 18 year so there wasn't much time to make friends. How or where do I start to find friends? — Wanting Company

DEAR COMPANY: Start with what you enjoy. What hobbies or activities pique your interest? You can do a general search or look on sites like Meetup to get started. Or try something new. Explore something you've never thought about before. Take a tap dance class or a pottery course; join a book club.

Reach out to your local senior center, the AARP, or YMCA to see what they're offering. Something as simple as a meal or a movie night can introduce you to new people.

Many readers have also written about the community they find at places like The Villages (vtnetwork.org), which is a network designed to help elders age in place through activities, volunteer opportunities and logistical support like rides.

DEAR ERIC: I recently attended a concert where the audience sat for most of the concert and stood up for three or four songs.

However, the person directly in front of me stood up for the entire concert, completely blocking my view.

When I informed the person that they were ruining my experience, the person told me it was their right to stand.

I asked an usher for help, but they refused to step in.

Do you think it is appropriate for someone to be so inconsiderate? What is the correct etiquette at a concert? — No View of the Stage

DEAR STAGE: Concerts are a rare social space where it's appropriate, even encouraged to stand if you can and want to. That doesn't negate your right to enjoy yourself, too. But it might require some creativity. Is it possible to ask a nearby stander if you can switch places or ask an usher if you can move to a different seat.

There are plenty of places where standing is going to be a no-go. I can't imagine standing through "Hamlet" unless I'm at the Old Globe, for instance. Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring" may have originally incited a riotous response, but people generally sit for it nowadays. However, depending on the type of music and the vibe of the concert, it may be necessary to find an alternative to ensure maximum enjoyment.

Send questions to R. Eric Thomas at eric@asking-eric.com or P.O. Box 22474, Philadelphia, PA 19110.

CRYPTOQUOTE

One letter stands for another. In this sample — **AXYDLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW** — A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

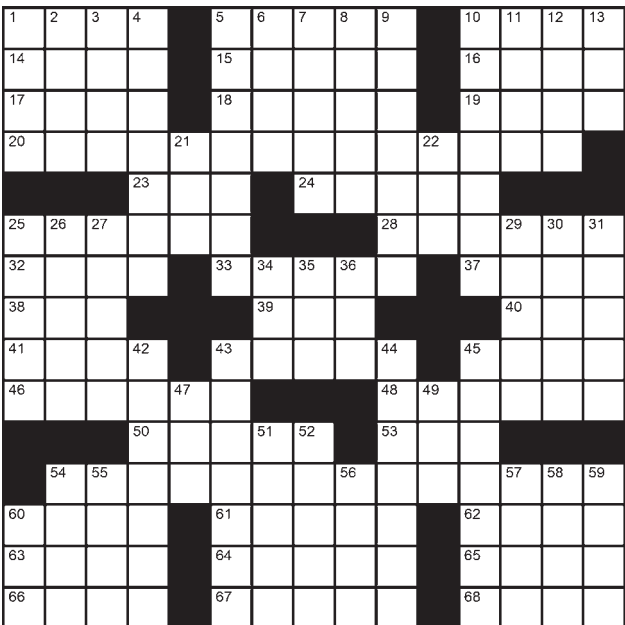
V W Q T T I F H F Y S U T F Y V B X
H B X V T Y B E F V Y K T R B O V W Y P .
— S F Y V P Y K J B X

THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

- ACROSS**
- 1 Use the phone
 - 5 Refereed a baseball game
 - 10 Joe Kernen's network
 - 14 Region
 - 15 Indian wheat bread
 - 16 Enjoy a book
 - 17 Dryer fluff
 - 18 Actress Dern
 - 19 "I'm all ___!"
 - 20 Trend-settingly stylish: 2 wds.
 - 23 Historic period
 - 24 Small mistakes
 - 25 Had in common
 - 28 Come forth
 - 32 Toy dogs, for short
 - 33 Keeps for later
 - 37 College housing
 - 38 Flightless bird
 - 39 Pastor's title: Abbr.

- 40 Silent
- 41 Egg-laying spot
- 43 Behaved
- 45 ___ moons ago
- 46 Had visions at night
- 48 Happenings
- 50 Sandwich shops
- 53 Girl in the fam
- 54 Hands-on training period
- 60 Norway's capital
- 61 Battery part
- 62 Mysterious glow
- 63 Bath soap brand
- 64 ___ Deadly Sins
- 65 Big smile
- 66 Copenhagen native
- 67 Dog's reward
- 68 If not

- DOWN**
- 1 Baby cow
 - 2 Opera solo
 - 3 Microscope part
 - 4 Makes suds
 - 5 Saves to the cloud
 - 6 ___ and groan
 - 7 Soft footrests
 - 8 Actor Flynn
 - 9 Private journals
 - 10 Folded
 - 11 Close by
 - 12 Medieval poet
 - 13 Old music holders: Abbr.
 - 21 Fury
 - 22 Typing speed stat: Abbr.
 - 25 Throw money around
 - 26 Four-bagger in baseball
 - 27 Entertain
 - 29 Julius Caesar, e.g.
 - 30 Pig's sound
 - 31 TV awards
 - 34 Part of a circle
 - 35 GI who's seen combat, for short
 - 36 Adam and ___
 - 42 Baby frog
 - 43 No less than: 2 wds.



Created by Stella Zawistowski

1/21/26

Today's solution

E S T E R T I V E R T E N V D
N I R G N E A L S T V I O
V R N V E O N V O T S I O
P I H S E C I T N E R P d A
S I S S I L E D E
S I N E V E T W T S E R E
A N V W D E I C V T S E N
W U W A E R U W E
W R O D S E A A S W O d
E G R E D S E W A H S
S P I T S A R A E
D R V W R O F N O I H S V E
S R E A U O L A T N I T
D S E R I R O O D E N E R V
C B N C D E D M U M T L V C A

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1/21/26

- 44 Family origin
- 45 Email or text
- 47 "La ___" (Debussy piece)
- 49 Contend
- 51 Word before "peace" or "sanctum"
- 52 Kitchen range
- 54 Largest continent
- 55 Think ahead
- 56 "What's the big ___?"
- 57 Throw forcefully
- 58 Showy spring flower
- 59 Window section
- 60 Unusual

Cryptoquote solution
TO KEEP A WARM HEART IN WINTER IS A TRUE VICTORY — MARTY RUBIN

	4		7		3		5
6						4	8
			1				
		4	2		5	7	
	5			3		2	
	6		8		9	5	
				8			
4	3						1
1		8		2		3	

HOROSCOPE

JAN. 21

ARIES (March 21-April 19) You might process an old disappointment — what they did is on them, learning the lesson and releasing it is your silver lining. Accountability is important, always assign it to the right person.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Integrate 3-D understanding with higher guidance for the most powerful approach. A strategic alliance could boost confidence and allow both of you to rise. Be discreet if you don't know someone well.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) You might find the 'channel' you've been looking for your whole life, there could be some seriously valuable intel that can finally come in for you. Don't let your career mood hinge on other's choices.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Someone who has some sway in your life could finally get enough clarity to come on board in a more helpful way. Make the connection happen if you can. Remember that comparison is a thief of joy.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) A partner or counterpart could have the answer you need ready to go. Don't let yourself get discouraged about a situation needing improved cooperation, this one may need time to resolve, try to let it go for now.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) If you've even wanted to step up as a mentor, now could be an excellent time. Offering helpful knowledge is one of the best ways to pay it forward. A partner could need emotional support.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Some discouragement over an attempt to help gone wrong could crop up now. Not everything goes as humanly-planned but most things work out the way they need to from the perspective of the Universe.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) You might know exactly what to do with a domestic situation, the fix could be approved of by all. The heart might be able to understand something new when calmly and logically presented.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) When your mind is clear, your confidence can be strong. Speak out from that place of clarity if motivated. Don't take it as a personal fail if a plan does not work out as you hoped.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Disloyalty from a friend can cut deep even if you understand what they deal with. Guard confidences well, uphold boundaries, and understand that people can only act from their current level of awareness.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Your mind is one of your greatest tools, as you learn to trust your thinking you build your inner sovereignty. Disentangle feelings from a financial situation, they won't help you cut to the chase.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) Past mistakes are the greatest university ever, harvest their full value for a PhD in self-mastery. Set aside shame, it takes lots of practice, but you have to if you want to learn from the past to build a stronger future.

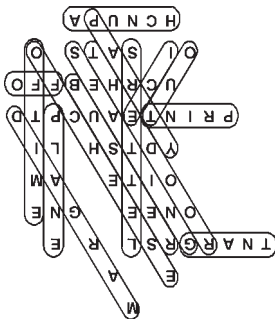
Sudoku solution

9	8	6	4	2	5	8	7	1
1	8	2	7	6	9	5	3	4
7	5	4	3	1	7	9	2	6
3	1	5	6	4	8	2	4	7
4	2	9	1	3	7	6	5	8
6	7	8	5	9	2	4	1	3
2	6	7	9	1	4	3	8	5
8	4	1	2	5	3	7	6	9
5	9	3	8	7	6	1	2	4

Jumble solution

DRIVING NAILS
PLANT GRIME INVITE DISCUS

Sleuth solution



SUDOKU

How to play: Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9.

JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NPTAL
MIERG
IVNEIT
UCDSIS

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THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Are we gonna be able to frame today?
The only thing that's getting hammered is us in traffic.

THE CARPENTERS WERE STUCK IN TRAFFIC INSTEAD OF ---

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

WORD SLEUTH • BLOCK

O E B X U R O L I E B Y V S Q
N K H E B Y W M T R O L J G E
B Y W U R E P N A K I G D B Z
T N A R G R S L X R V E S Q O
A M K I O N E E G E G N E C A
C Y W U S O I T E Q P A M N L
K J H F E Y D T S H C L I A Y
L X P R I N T E A U C P T D V
E U S Q P U C R H E B F F O N
M K J H O I F S A T S E O C B
Z Y X V U H C N U P A T R Q P

Tuesday's unlisted clue: YURT

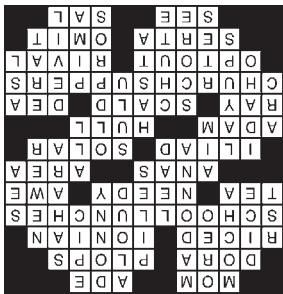
Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.
Wednesday's unlisted clue hint: BLOCK AND —

A punch	Ice	Off	Print
Buster	Letters	Out	Seating
Diagram	Of cheese	Party	The door
Grant	Of time	Plane	

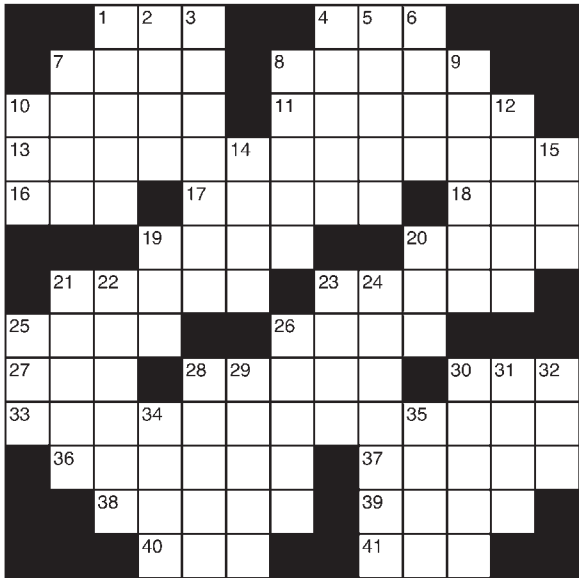
SHEFFER CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 May honoree
 - 4 Citrus drink
 - 7 Nickel-odeon's "Explorer"
 - 8 Falls into a chair
 - 10 Put through a sieve, as potatoes
 - 11 Sea off Sicily
 - 13 Cafeteria meals for students
 - 16 Darjee-ling, e.g.
 - 17 Poor
 - 18 Shock partner
 - 19 Literary collections
 - 20 Length times width
 - 21 Trojan War story
 - 23 Sun-powered
 - 25 Eve's mate
 - 26 Ship's frame
- 27** Comic Romano
- 28** Heat to near boiling
- 30** Narc's org.
- 33** Commu-nal meals at a place of worship
- 36** Decline to partici-pate
- 37** Com-petitor brand
- 38** Mattress brand
- 39** Skip
- 40** Ob-serve
- 41** Erie Canal mule
- DOWN**
- 1 Frap-puccino flavoring
 - 2 Popular layered cookie
 - 3 "Material Girl" singer
 - 4 Vocally
 - 5 Marie's brother
 - 6 Monu-mental
 - 7 "Monop-oly" cubes
 - 8 Heaps
 - 9 African desert
 - 10 Letters after Q
 - 12 More recent
- 14** Pencil filler
- 15** Mer-maid's home
- 19** Goal
- 20** 100 percent
- 21** The Gem State
- 22** Two-point shots
- 23** "Star Trek" helms-man
- 24** Veterans
- 25** Curved line
- 26** "— luego!"
- 28** Sports-cast offering
- 29** Para-trooper's need
- 30** One with a pitchfork
- 31** Part of Q.E.D.
- 32** Visual commu-nication syst.
- 34** Num-bered rds.
- 35** Fine cotton

Solution time: 23 mins.



Today's solution



THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil Keane



1-21

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Dist. by King Features Synd.
www.familycircus.com

“The fingers on his left hand
do all the walking.”

By Bil Keane

DENNIS THE MENACE



1-21

“THIS IS FOR WHEN DENNIS RUNS AWAY FROM HOME...SO I KNOW I’VE GOT A PLACE TO STAY!”

ARCTIC CIRCLE



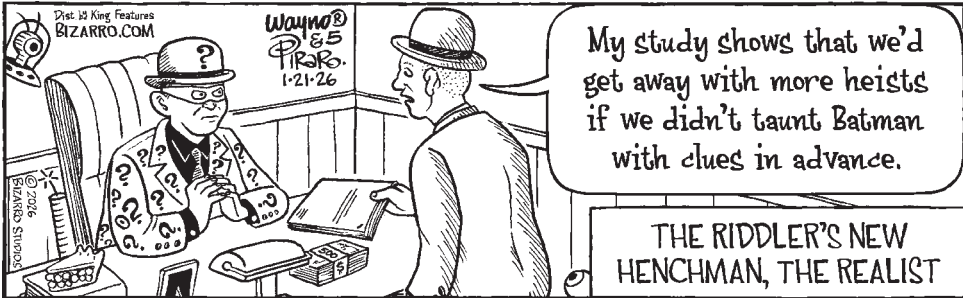
WE SHOULD SPEND MORE OF OUR DEFENCE BUDGET ON RENEWABLE ENERGY.

IT WOULD MAKE US LESS VULNERABLE TO ATTACKS ON OUR POWER INFRASTRUCTURE.

WE CAN’T FIRE SHELLS, BUT IT SURE CONFUSES THE ENEMY.

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BIZARRO



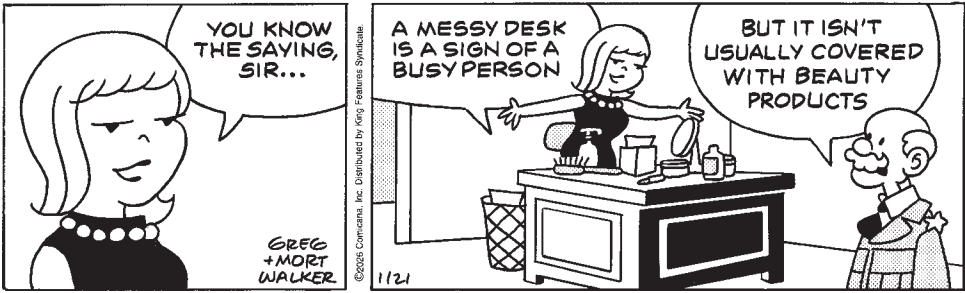
THE 10 King Features
BIZARRO.COM

Waymo® & S
Piror.
1-21-26

My study shows that we’d get away with more heists if we didn’t taunt Batman with clues in advance.

THE RIDDLER’S NEW HENCHMAN, THE REALIST

BEETLE BAILEY



YOU KNOW THE SAYING, SIR...

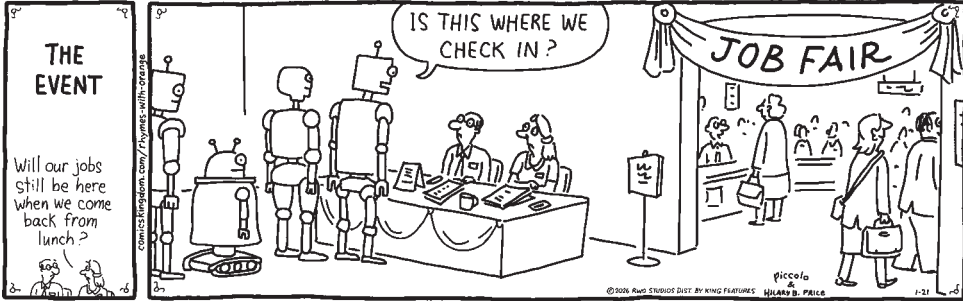
A MESSY DESK IS A SIGN OF A BUSY PERSON

BUT IT ISN’T USUALLY COVERED WITH BEAUTY PRODUCTS

GREG & MORT WALKER

©2026 Greg & Mort Walker. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

RHYMES WITH ORANGE



THE EVENT

Will our jobs still be here when we come back from lunch?

IS THIS WHERE WE CHECK IN?

JOB FAIR

©2026 Russ Smith. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

BLONDIE



HONEY, LOOK WHAT I FOUND: MY “HONEY DO” LIST FROM WHEN WE FIRST MOVED INTO OUR HOUSE!

OH?

WOW, AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, YOU STILL HAVEN’T COMPLETED MOST OF WHAT’S ON THIS LIST! YOU MUST HAVE FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT IT!

ACTUALLY, I THOUGHT I HID IT BETTER THAN THAT!

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CURTIS



I LEAD SUCH A BUSY SCHEDULE I DON’T HAVE TIME TO MINGLE WITH OTHER PEOPLE

DANCE CLASS, VOCAL COACHING, THEATER TRAINING, CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS, AUDIO ENGINEERING AND MUSIC PRODUCTION

AS MUCH I APPLAUD YOUR CHOICE TO BE A GYNCOLOGIST, YOU NEED TO GET OUT

NO, YOU NEED TO GET OUT!

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HI & LOIS



DO YOU BELIEVE IN SPACE ALIENS?

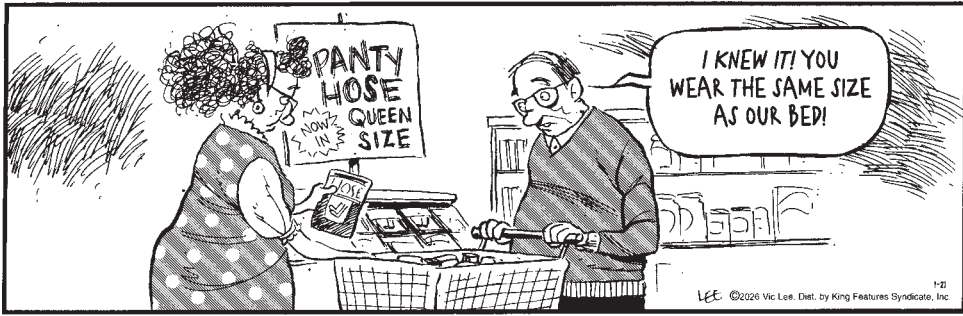
SURE.

WHAT’S YOUR PROOF?

YOU’RE HERE.

©2026 Hi & Lois. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

PARDON MY PLANET



PANTY HOSE QUEEN SIZE

I KNEW IT! YOU WEAR THE SAME SIZE AS OUR BED!

LEE ©2026 Vic Lee. Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

ZITS



SARA GOT ALL WEIRD WHEN WE WENT DOWNTOWN YESTERDAY.

SHE ACTUALLY ACCUSED ME OF CHECKING OUT THE DEPARTMENT STORE MANNEQUINS.

...WHICH YOU WERE.

HORMONES ARE IDIOTS.

©2026 Zits. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

DUMPLINGS



DANI, DID YOU HEAR?! NO SCHOOL!

YEAH, THEY SAID IT’S -40° WINDCHILL. IF YOU GO OUTSIDE, YOU RISK ALMOST IMMEDIATE FROST-BITE.

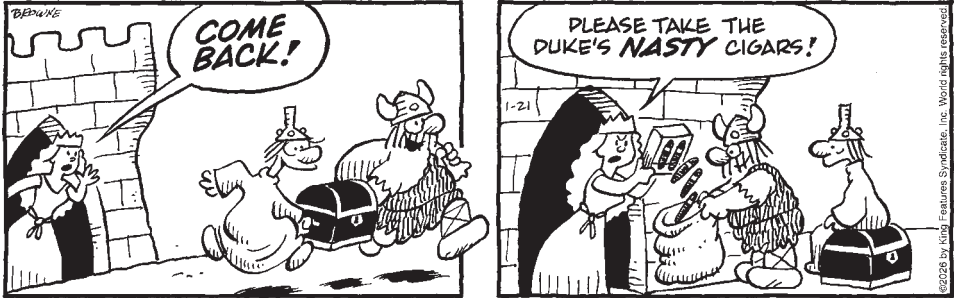
WHOA.

OKAY, I’LL BE OVER IN A MINUTE!

CLICK

©2026 Dumplings. Dist. by King Features Syndicate

HAGAR THE HORRIBLE

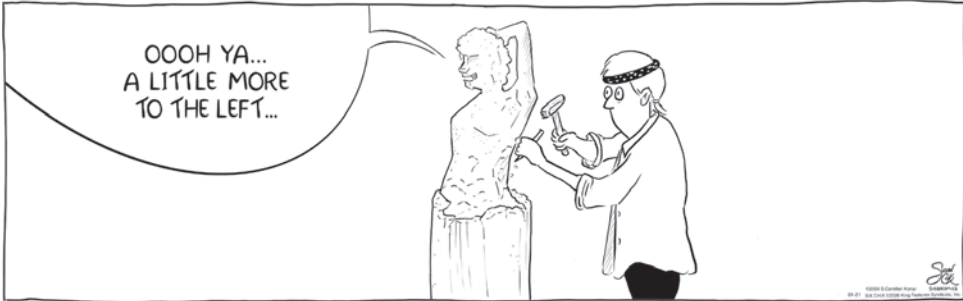


COME BACK!

PLEASE TAKE THE DUKE’S NASTY CIGARS!

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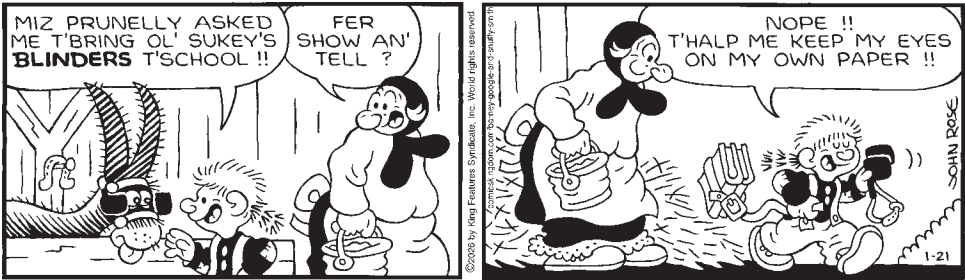
SIX CHIX



OOOH YA... A LITTLE MORE TO THE LEFT...

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BARNEY GOOGLE AND SNUFFY SMITH



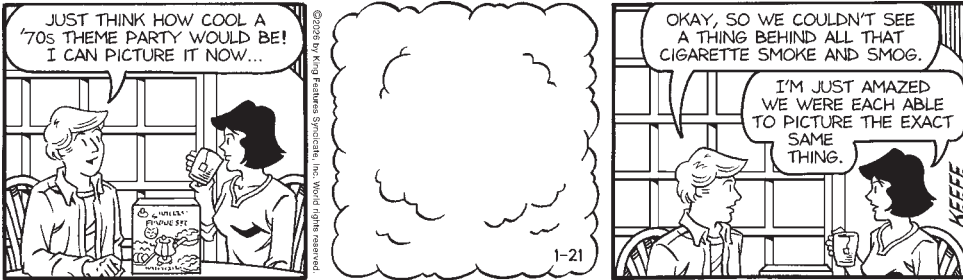
MIZ PRUNELLY ASKED ME T’BRING OL’ SUKEY’S BLINDERS T’SCHOOL !!

FER SHOW AN’ TELL ?

NOPE !! T’HALP ME KEEP MY EYES ON MY OWN PAPER !!

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SALLY FORTH



JUST THINK HOW COOL A “70S THEME PARTY WOULD BE! I CAN PICTURE IT NOW...

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DUSTIN



WE’RE TALKING ABOUT MEN NOT DOING THEIR SHARE OF THE HOUSEWORK. HANKY, YOU’RE ON THE LINE.

I TRY TO TELL MY WIFE...

...I JUST DON’T NOTICE THINGS ARE GETTING MESSY AS SOON AS HER. SHE CLEANS BEFORE I SEE THE NEED.

SHE ACTUALLY TAKES THAT ARGUMENT SERIOUSLY?

NOT REALLY. I GUESS SHE DOESN’T SEE THE NEED.

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MUTTS



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SHIFFLE
SHIFF

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HONK
HONK
HONK

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

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APC Towers, LLC is proposing to construct a 199-foot overall height monopole telecommunications structure located near Creek Road, Niles, Berrien County, Michigan (41° 53' 34.7"N, 86° 13' 26.0" W). The proposed tower is anticipated to utilize FAA Style E (medium intensity, dual red/white strobes) lighting.

APC Towers, LLC invites comments from any interested party on the impact the proposed undertaking may have on any districts, sites, buildings, structures, or objects significant in American history, archaeology, engineering, or culture that are listed or determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Comments may be sent to Environmental Corporation of America, ATTN: Annamarie Howell, 1375 Union Hill Industrial Court, Suite A, Alpharetta, GA 30004 or via email to publicnotice@eca-usa.com. Ms. Howell can be reached at (770) 667-2040 x 108 during normal business hours. Comments must be received within 30 days of the date of this notice.

In addition, any interested party may also request further environmental review of the proposed action under the FCC's National Environmental Policy Act rules, 47 CFR §1.1307, by notifying the FCC of the specific reasons that the action may have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. This request must only raise environmental concerns and can be filed online using the FCC pleadings system at www.fcc.gov or mailed to FCC Requests for Environmental Review, Attn: Ramon Williams, 45 L Street NE, Washington, DC 20554 within 30 days of the date that notice of this proposed action is published on the FCC's website. Refer to File No. A1352632 when submitting the request and to view the specific information about the proposed action. 25-005167 MMT

APC Towers, LLC is proposing to construct a 199-foot overall height monopole telecommunications structure located off Oxbow Road, Sodus, Berrien County, Michigan (42° 1' 16.9" N, 86° 21' 41.1" W). The proposed tower is anticipated to utilize FAA Style E (medium intensity, dual red/white strobes) lighting.

APC Towers, LLC invites comments from any interested party on the impact the proposed undertaking may have on any districts, sites, buildings, structures, or objects significant in American history, archaeology, engineering, or culture that are listed or determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Comments may be sent to Environmental Corporation of America, ATTN: Annamarie Howell, 1375 Union Hill Industrial Court, Suite A, Alpharetta, GA 30004 or via email to publicnotice@eca-usa.com. Ms. Howell can be reached at (770) 667-2040 x 108 during normal business hours. Comments must be received within 30 days of the date of this notice.

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A black bear is shown foraging some berries in a summery Michigan scene.

Michigan DNR photo



Sarett Nature Center Sarett Nature Stewards:

2-4 p.m. each Wednesday. This program is a way to experience Sarett in a whole different way. By being a nature steward you are helping Sarett but you also gain a sense of well-being. Sarett's crew will teach you many different skills such as collecting viable seeds for future planting, how to identify invasive species from native ones, removing invasive plants, and more. For ages 10 and older.

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Email info for Get Outdoors to sports@TheHP.com, or call 429-1294 by Monday.

Michigan approves electronic kill tags for hunters, so how will they work?

By LAURA HERBERG
Bridge Michigan

Starting March 1, Michigan hunters will no longer need to display paper kill tags on certain animals.

Instead, they'll be able to validate kills using the Hunt Fish mobile app.

The change comes after the Natural Resources Commission on Wednesday approved the optional use of electronic kill tags for deer, bobcat, bear, fisher, marten and otter.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has been piloting digital kill tags for turkey hunters since fall 2024, but otherwise hunters have needed to use a physical kill tag, which can be picked up at a license agent or received through the mail.

Having a digital tag option is expected to save the department money by reducing printing and distribution costs. It may also make things more convenient for hunters by allowing them to buy a tag online in the days leading up to a hunt and by making it easier to keep track of their tag once purchased.

According to the DNR, 27,475 hunters lost their paper licenses and had to purchase another in 2024.

How will this actually work? Read on for questions and answers.

How will I be able to purchase an electronic kill tag?

Once you download the Hunt Fish app on your smartphone, you will be able to purchase a tag inside the app.

How will the electronic kill tag actually work?

Once you make a kill, you will open your app and validate the kill by answering a few questions. If you do not have cell service or are unable to connect to WiFi, you can still fill out the information on your phone. Once you get cell service or connect to WiFi, the data will be uploaded.

How will conservation officers know that my hunt was legal?

If a conservation officer requests to see your kill tag and you purchased it electronically, you can open the Hunt Fish app to show them the tag. If you have not had cell service or WiFi since the kill, you can still show them the validated kill tag you entered on your phone.

What happens if my phone is dead?

If your phone dies, a conservation officer can run your ID to find out if you purchased a tag and what kind of tag it was. If your tag was validated and uploaded

via cell service or WiFi before your phone died, the conservation officer will be able to see that.

What if I'm not with the carcass?

You may not always be right there with the body of the animal you hunted to present an electronic tag. For example, you may leave it at a buck pole or have a friend drive it for you.

In instances like those, you will need to make a tag out of durable material with the hunting license number written on it in permanent ink and attach it to the carcass.

There are, however, some exceptions:

1. If the head is no longer attached to the carcass, then the durable tag only needs to be with the head.
2. If the animal's remains are stored at your primary residence, you won't need to worry about having a physical tag for it.
3. If the carcass or head is accepted and recorded by a commercial processor or taxidermist, a physical tag no longer needs to be attached to it.

What happens if I get my deer tested?

In Michigan, deer may be tested for diseases like bovine tuberculosis or chronic wasting disease, especially in counties where the disease is being actively surveilled.

If you take your deer head or carcass to a disease sample submission site for testing and you have an electronic tag, your phone will have the same information that you would have on a paper tag. The station can use that information to process your dropoff. The facility will then tag your deer head or any sample you drop off so that it can be properly tracked during the testing process.

What other states have electronic kill tags or something similar?

According to the DNR, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin also use apps and digital tags.

Can I still use a paper kill tag?

Yes. Electronic kill tags will be optional, not mandatory. You can still purchase a physical kill tag and pick it up at a license agent or get it through the mail.

This story was originally published by Bridge Michigan and distributed through a partnership with The Associated Press.

Bear hunters record strong 2025 harvest in Michigan

By ANDY HENION
Michigan DNR

Bear hunters recorded another robust season in Michigan in 2025, harvesting nearly 2,000 animals and bringing home a remarkable number of large bears in the Upper Peninsula.

At the Escanaba-area check stations alone, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources registered an estimated 20 bears above 400 pounds and eight bears above 500 pounds, according to Cody Norton, the DNR's bear, furbearer and small game specialist.

"We saw a phenomenal number of unusually large bears harvested across the Upper Peninsula," said Norton, a Marquette-based wildlife biologist and avid bear hunter. "This is something we've been working toward with our long-term bear management plan — growing the total number of bears and giving hunters more opportunities to harvest large, mature animals."

The strong harvest comes as Michigan celebrates 100 years of regulated bear hunting and demand for bear licenses is at an all-time high. The DNR uses hunting as a primary tool to manage a sustainable black bear population, which sits at about 12,500 statewide.

Hunters in Michigan harvested 1,952 black bears in 2025, according to preliminary numbers from the DNR. That's slightly above the state's five-year average of 1,911 bears harvested per year.

In the U.P. — home to 83 percent of Michigan's bears — hunters harvested 1,522 bears during the September/October hunting season. In the northern Lower Peninsula, hunters harvested 430 bears.

While bears are not weighed at all state-managed check stations, wildlife experts estimate their weight. Norton said the significant number of large bears harvested in the U.P. indicates the presence of more mature animals and a good year for food sources, such as vegetation and berries.

In the eastern U.P., Paulla Schemm harvested her first bear Sept. 16, which weighed more than 200 pounds.

Schemm, a veteran hunter from Flushing, said she and her husband benefited from the DNR's bear hunting clinic in Cadillac. She wants to inspire more people to hunt.

"I'd like to keep the spirit alive — particularly in getting more women and children interested in hunting," said Schemm, who harvested the bear in the Newberry area. "Hunting is a part of conservation. It's important."

'Greatest' experience

Milton Miller, 97, shot a bear this fall near his hunting cabin in the northeastern Lower Peninsula. The nearly 300-pound boar was Miller's first Michigan-harvested bear. He previously killed one in Alberta, Canada.

Miller had applied for a bear hunting license for nine consecutive years in the Red Oak bear management unit, which encompasses his property in Alcona County. He finally drew a tag last year.

"Shooting this bear was probably, of all my hunting experiences, the greatest one," said Miller, a retired bridge



Milton Miller photo

Anne Christman helped her neighbor Milton Miller track and field-dress this bear in Alcona County after he made the hunt alone.

inspector from Macomb Township. His story was chronicled in Outdoor Life.

In mid-September, Miller had been hunting with his grandson for several days with no luck. On the afternoon of Sept. 15, his grandson had to work, so Miller headed into the woods alone, driving an ATV a half-mile from his cabin to his blind. He parked and walked the last few hundred yards, settling into the blind about 3 p.m.

Nothing happened all afternoon. But just as Miller was gathering his gear, a bear came out of the woods and headed to the bait in front of his blind. Miller lifted his rifle to shoot, just as a bigger bear appeared.

The first bear ambled by his blind to hit the bait as he waited for the second bear to walk closer. When the bigger bear was about 35 feet away, Miller put the crosshairs of his rifle behind the animal's shoulder and pulled the trigger.

The bear ran back into the woods. There was no visible blood, and Miller thought he may have missed. He texted a friend, Anne Christman, who told him to stay in the blind until she got there. It took Christman an hour to get to Miller, and they began tracking the bear together.

They saw blood in the woods, and after about 40 yards, they found the bear. Together, they field-dressed the animal, then loaded it into Miller's ATV and he drove back to his cabin. Miller covered the bear in ice and finally got to bed around 2 a.m.

When contacted in early December about his harvest, Miller, a widower, was thawing a steak from the boar for dinner. The Army veteran has outlived two hunting partners but said his passion for hunting remains.

"I still love to hunt," he said.

Record applications

Michigan's popular bear hunt is based on a preference point system that rewards persistence. Hunters earn one point for each year they apply and are unsuccessful at drawing a license. Those with the most accumulated points are selected annually to fill quotas in each of the 10 bear management units.

Licenses generally take longer to get in the Lower Peninsula due to the

"We saw a phenomenal number of unusually large bears harvested across the Upper Peninsula."

CODY NORTON
Marquette wildlife biologist

smaller bear population and high demand.

The DNR sets a desired bear harvest to establish license quotas and manage the bear population. License quotas are calculated using the average hunter success rate over the previous few years for each management unit and hunt period. Statewide, the hunter success rate is hovering around 40 percent.

Norton said the desired harvest has hit the mark pretty closely over the past few years, falling within about 15 percent of the goal. An increasing bear population in the U.P. has resulted in harvest above goal, while a more stabilized bear population in the Lower Peninsula has seen harvest very consistent with goals. The next adjustments will be made for the cycle of bear hunting regulations covering 2027-2028.

Hunters can apply for either a bear hunting license or a preference point toward a future hunt. In 2025, nearly 73,000 hunters applied for either a license or a preference point — the most ever recorded since Michigan started regulating bear hunting in 1925.

Using the whole bear

In Michigan, bear hunters can use bait or dogs. Norton has harvested two bears using bait in the past. This year, for the first time, he harvested a bear using his dog, a bluetick coonhound named, simply, B.

Norton and a group of fellow hunters tracked the 150-pound boar through the woods near Channing in Dickinson County in the central Upper Peninsula. B and several other hounds were able to tree the bear, and Norton made a successful rifle shot for his third harvest.

"I skinned and butchered the bear myself the day I harvested it," Norton said. "We ate the heart and tendons that night. For cuts of meat, I cut backstraps, steaks and roasts and then froze the rest to grind it up."

Several years ago, Michigan passed a law that edible bear meat must be used, which most hunters already do, Norton noted. He said the change makes it clear to the public that harvested bears are being consumed and that the resource is not being wasted. "I like bear meat more than venison," Norton said. "The meat is richer and fattier, and the fat is not waxy like deer tallow. It also tastes sweeter to me. The only caveat is that it needs to be cooked well-done — to at least 160 degrees — in order to kill any potential trichinella parasites."

Norton cubed the bear fat and will render it into grease. He uses the grease as cooking oil for meat and vegetables, bakes with it and even uses it to condition his boots.

"This winter, I'll also be fleshing, stretching and drying the bear hide before sending it to a tannery," Norton said. "It will probably end up living on the back of the couch as a way to remember the hunt."

FINANCE



Tech billionaires Michael Dell (left) and Susan Dell join U.S. President Donald Trump to make an announcement about “Trump accounts” in the Roosevelt Room at the White House on Dec. 2, 2025, in Washington, D.C.

What you need to know about the ‘Trump Accounts’ And how to get in on this new program

By **TREVOR BACH**
The Dallas Morning News (TNS)

As President Donald Trump’s core Big Beautiful Bill legislation advanced through Congress late last spring, he also began talking about a new government investment plan for kids.

“This is a pro-family initiative that will help millions of Americans harness the strength of our economy to lift up the next generation, and they’ll really be getting a big jump on life,” the president said from the White House. “Trump Accounts will contribute to the lifelong success of millions of newborn babies.”

The savings accounts are now slated to become active on July 5, and Texas politicians and business leaders have also gotten involved. Here’s what you need to know about the new government program.

How do the accounts work?

The accounts are a new type of IRA, or Individual Retirement Account, designed to offer kids a long-term savings plan and exposure to the stock market. The money in the accounts must be invested in certain eligible funds, including mutual funds and market-tracking ETFs.

Generally, no withdrawals are allowed until the year the child turns 18: At that point, they can take control of the account and begin making penalty-free withdrawals to use for certain specific purposes like college or starting a business. The withdrawals are subject to ordinary income taxes, plus a 10 percent penalty if they aren’t for qualified spending or occur before the account holder turns 59 and a half.

Parents will be able to enroll their child by filing an IRS form or using an online portal that’s expected to become available by summer. (The Trump Administration has an email update sign-up form related to the accounts here.)

Isn’t the government funding these?

Yes – for newborns. The Trump Administration has promised to seed the new accounts with \$1,000

as part of a pilot program. Children who were born after Jan. 1, 2025, are eligible for that seed money, with the program slated to continue for kids born through Dec. 31, 2028. (Roughly 3.6 million babies are born in the U.S. each year, so the \$1,000 per kid initiative will come with a price tag of several billion dollars annually.)

What about other contributions?

Besides the \$1,000 for newborns, individuals – parents, grandparents, friends – employers and other groups, like charities, are also able to contribute up to a total of \$5,000 per year into a single account, although those contributions are not tax-deductible.

In recent weeks, various billionaires and companies have also gotten in on the act. Last month Michael Dell, the Houston-born tech magnate and Uptown Dallas developer, and his wife Susan pledged \$6.25 billion to help fund the accounts. The donation promises to fund \$250 deposits for at least 25 million kids who are 10 years old and younger, were born before the government funding cut-off of Jan. 1, 2025, and live in ZIP codes where the median household income is below \$150,000. That includes most of Dallas-Fort Worth.

“It’s designed to help families feel supported from the start and encourage them to keep saving,” Michael Dell told CNBC.

After the Dells’ massive philanthropic announcement, billionaire hedge fund founder Ray Dalio and his wife Barbara promised a similar donation for kids in Connecticut. Dell Technologies, Mastercard, BlackRock, Block, Uber, Visa, BNY and Charter are also supporting the federal program, with at least some of those companies promising to match the government’s donation for their employees.

How else does this connect to Texas?

Texas has a population of roughly 7.5 million kids under 18 who will be eligible for the federal accounts. But the state could also end up

starting its own plan in addition to the federal program.

“I love President @realDonaldTrump’s idea to invest \$1,000 for every American newborn child,” Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick wrote on X last month. “If I see a great idea from the President that helps Texans, my first question is always, ‘why not do it in Texas, too?’”

Patrick went on to write that the Texas savings account idea, which he dubbed the “New Little Texan Savings Fund,” would be a top priority for the 2027 legislative session and cost around \$400 million per year.

Last month Westlake-based Charles Schwab also announced it would match the federal government’s \$1,000 donation for children born to employees. The financial services giant has several thousand local employees.

How are people reacting?

Plenty of parents whose kids will be eligible for the accounts – especially for the promised \$1,000 seed money – are quite happy, of course. The financial services industry, which stands to benefit from tens of billions of dollars potentially flowing into the markets, is also excited.

The federal initiative has also inspired at least an inkling of bipartisan support, with Sens. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, and Cory Booker, D-N.J. – a longtime advocate of “baby bonds” as a mechanism to narrow the country’s wealth gap – recently teaming up on an effort to encourage Fortune 1000 CEOs to contribute to the accounts.

“I think there’s a lot of things we can do to improve it,” Booker recently told the website Roll Call, “but for every child in America to have an individual investment account could be game-changing, especially if we can get the number of that initial investment up as much as possible.”

Cruz has also championed the Texas effort, calling it “fantastic,” although the state push has generated pushback from small-government groups. “We are opposed to this idea before the bill is even filed,” Texas Policy Research, an influential conservative nonprofit,

wrote on social media. “Creating state-run wealth accounts for every newborn violates key liberty principles: it expands government rather than limiting it, replaces personal responsibility with state dependency, and undermines free enterprise by turning the state into an investor.”

What do experts say?

Economists of various persuasions have long promoted the idea of giving kids nest eggs as vehicles to build wealth and narrow inequality. But the Trump Accounts plan, while drawing some praise, has sparked criticism for various reasons.

Even as its backers promote the accounts as a populist-style mechanism to level the economic playing field for all Americans, critics have pointed out that the program, which comes with a \$1,000 government seed but otherwise relies on additional outside contributions, means it’s more likely to benefit wealthy kids than poorer kids whose parents can’t afford to fork over thousands more annually.

“We already have extremely significant wealth gaps by income, by race, by gender,” Amy Matsui, vice president for child care and income security at the National Women’s Law Center, told PBS NewsHour. “And the way that this policy is structured, it’s not going to narrow them. It has the potential to widen them.”

Experts also say that the requirement that parents sign up, as opposed to having kids enrolled automatically, is also likely to leave out millions of eligible participants, while the program’s limited tax benefits mean it’s probably an inferior savings plan than existing programs like Roth IRAs or 529 college plans.

Still, for a baby who receives the \$1,000 seed money, the account balance is likely to rise to at least several thousand dollars by the time they turn 18, even without additional contributions from parents or employers. Many economists are pushing for reforms, but free money is still free money.

“Better than nothing,” Theresa Ghilarducci, a labor economist, said of the program.

FOOD

5 SIMPLE DINNERS TO EASE BACK INTO COOKING IN THE NEW YEAR

By **GRETCHEN MCKAY**
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (TNS)

Still suffering from a post-holiday drag? After the fun of Christmas and New Year's, it's completely understandable if you're having a hard time snapping back into a routine.

The fact that it's still getting light too late and dark too early – we won't set our clocks forward for spring until March 8 – only adds to the funk that is a Western Pennsylvania winter, marked by gray skies, a freezing mix of snow and rain and slushy sidewalks.

After a steady diet of festive desserts, rich and hearty sides and too much alcohol, "everyday" cooking might feel daunting on a busy weeknight. A relaxed holiday schedule has left many of us out of practice in getting dinners on the table at a set time. And if you've over-indulged over the past few weeks, you might be trying to eat less to shed those extra holiday pounds.

We get it. It can be tough to get back on track and re-establish home cooking habits, especially when the frozen dinner aisle and takeout make it so easy to compromise. That's why it's often best to start the process with baby steps – simple meals that don't call for lots of ingredients or take too much time (or effort) start to finish.

To help inspire you, we've assembled five flavorful recipes that each require no more than six everyday ingredients and only take about a half hour to prepare on the stovetop.

Don't love washing pans? Me either! All of the following are made and served from a single skillet, guaranteeing easy cleanup.

There is a slight catch: All five dishes assume you have kitchen staples like vegetable oil or extra-virgin olive oil, salt and pepper, garlic cloves, unsalted butter, sugar and various spices already on hand.

All prove, however, that sometimes the simplest dinners are the best ones, and they don't have to be boring.

Easy Lemon Chicken

Serves 4

I've made this dish for my family too many times to count, and still it's a favorite. You can use less butter

if you're trying to cut down on fat and calories. For a gluten-free dish, dust the chicken in cornstarch or almond flour instead of all-purpose flour.

I think it's best on rice, but kids love their noodles!

2 whole chicken breasts, boned, skinned and halved
4 tablespoons butter, divided
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 1/2 cups unbleached flour
Salt and pepper
2 lemons
Chopped fresh parsley
Cooked rice or noodles, for serving

Wash and dry chicken breasts. Pound them flat between two pieces of waxed paper or inside a resealable plastic bag with a mallet or rolling pin.

Melt 2 tablespoons butter and oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Pour flour in a plastic bag, season with salt and pepper, and drop the breasts in to coat. Shake off excess flour.

Turn heat up to moderately high and put chicken breasts in the skillet. Depending on how thin you've pounded them, they should cook approximately 3 minutes on each side or until cooked through and still tender. When they're done, season with salt and pepper, remove to a plate and set aside while you make the sauce.

Add 2 remaining tablespoons of butter to the chicken skillet and melt, scraping up brown bits in the pan.

Juice 1 lemon and slice the other. Add juice and lemon slices to skillet and cook until bubbly, then return chicken to the pan, spooning sauce over. Garnish with fresh parsley.

Serve with rice or cooked noodles.

Gretchen McKay, Post-Gazette

Rigatoni with Tomato Cream Sauce

Serves 4

Nothing is more comforting in winter than a bowl of pasta with red sauce. Here, crushed tomatoes simmer with cream and grated Parmesan to create a super-fast super-savory sauce for rigatoni. Add a simple green salad and loaf of crusty Italian bread for a complete meal.

6 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 (28-ounce) can whole San Marzano tomatoes
1/2 cup heavy cream
1 tablespoon concentrated tomato paste
1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese, plus more for serving
Salt, to taste
Red pepper flakes, to taste
4 cups cooked rigatoni or penne noodles

In a deep skillet, heat butter until melted.

Add tomatoes to pan, crushing them with a fork or potato masher. Simmer, stirring often, until the tomatoes have broken down, about 10 minutes. Season to taste with salt.

Stir in heavy cream and tomato paste and cook until the sauce thickens slightly, about 3 minutes. Stir in Parmesan cheese and toss to combine. Taste, add salt and, if you like some

A quick one-pan dinner pairs sweet Italian sausage with cheese tortellini and grape tomatoes.

spice, a few pinches of red pepper flakes. Add cooked pasta to pan and toss to combine.

Serve in warmed bowls, with extra Parmesan cheese.

Gretchen McKay, Post-Gazette

Skillet Tortellini with Sausage and Cherry Tomatoes

Serves 4

Tortellini are great for last-minute meals because they are so easy to cook and go with many different sauces. In this recipe, they are cooked directly in the pan with sweet Italian sausage along with sweet cherry or grape tomatoes.

The original recipe calls for dried tortellini, but I substituted frozen pasta. Fresh basil adds both color and freshness. If you have some grated Parmesan in the fridge, add that, too, for a cheesy finish.

1 pound bulk sweet or hot Italian sausage
2 garlic cloves, sliced thin
12 ounces frozen cheese tortellini
1 pint cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil

Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium heat until shimmering.

Add sausage and cook, breaking up meat with wooden spoon, until no longer pink, about 4 minutes.

Add garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add 1 cup water, tortellini and a pinch of salt and bring to boil.

Reduce heat to medium and simmer, stirring occasionally, until pasta is tender, about 10-12 minutes.

Stir in tomatoes and cook until slightly softened, about 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste, drizzle with olive oil to taste and sprinkle with basil.

Adapted from "Five Ingredient Dinners" by America's Test Kitchen

Pork and Coconut Pineapple Rice

Serves 4

If there ever was a marriage made in culinary heaven, it has to be pork and pineapple. This easy recipe pairs bite-sized chunks of sweet, juicy pineapple with tender bites of teriyaki-marinated pork tenderloin. The combo is piled high on a bed of creamy, equally tropical coconut rice.

FOR PORK:
1/4 – 1/2 cup teriyaki sauce
1 pound pork tenderloin, cut into bite-sized chunks
20-ounce can pineapple chunks, drained, or 1 fresh pineapple, peeled, cored and cubed
Olive oil, for sauteing
FOR RICE:
2 cups jasmine rice
1 (14-ounce) can unsweetened full-fat coconut milk
1 1/2 cups water

Single-Seared Garlic Shrimp Tacos

Serves 4

Tacos are a welcome weeknight meal because they don't take a lot of time or effort. These feature quick marinated shrimp and an easy green cabbage slaw. They're simple but super satisfying.

Both flour and corn tortillas work; just be sure to warm them on a hot skillet or in the microwave before stuffing them with shrimp and cabbage to keep them pliable.

2 limes
Salt and pepper
2 cups thinly sliced cabbage
1/2 small red onion
4 teaspoons, plus 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil, divided
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 1/2 teaspoons chili powder
24 large shrimp (about 1-1 1/2 pounds), peeled, deveined and patted dry
1 bunch fresh cilantro, roughly chopped (about 1/2 cup)
8 corn or flour tortillas, warmed in a microwave or on a hot skillet

In large bowl, whisk juice from 1 lime, 1 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper.

Mix in cabbage and onion. Set aside, tossing occasionally, while you prepare the shrimp.

In medium bowl, stir together 2 teaspoons oil, half the minced garlic, chili powder, 1 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper. Add shrimp and stir to combine. Allow to marinate for 5 minutes.

In a 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium-high, heat 1 teaspoon of oil until shimmering.

Add half the shrimp in an even layer and cook, undisturbed, until deep golden brown on the bottoms, about 2 minutes. Stir, then transfer to plate.

Repeat with another 1 teaspoon oil and the remaining shrimp, but leave shrimp in pan. Return first batch to pan.

Add remaining minced garlic; cook over medium, stirring, until the shrimp are opaque throughout, about 1 minute.

Transfer to a clean plate or bowl.

Add remaining 1 tablespoon oil and cilantro to the cabbage mixture and toss to combine. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Divide the shrimp among the tortillas (3 to each), top with cabbage mixture and serve with lime wedges.

Adapted from "Milk Street Shorts: Recipes That Pack a Punch" by Christopher Kimball

1 teaspoon salt
Generous pinch of sugar
Chopped cilantro, for garnish

Marinate pork in 1/4 cup of teriyaki sauce for 2-3 hours or overnight.

Rinse rice in several changes of cold water until the water runs clear. Use a large fine-mesh sieve to drain any remaining water and place rice in a pot.

Add coconut milk, water, salt and sugar. Bring the mixture to a boil over high heat. Once it starts to boil, turn the heat down to low, cover and cook for 20 minutes. Uncover and continue to cook for 5 minutes, then fluff and cover to keep warm.

While rice is cooking, prepare pork. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a nonstick skillet or grill pan over medium-high heat. Add pork, discarding the excess sauce. If you add all the sauce with it, it will steam the meat instead of caramelizing it.

Leave pork undisturbed in the hot pan for a few minutes to get better caramelization. Throw in pineapple and cook for 2-3 minutes so it gets saucy and caramelized, too. If desired, add a few additional tablespoons of sauce after everything is brown.

Portion cooked rice into bowls and top with a scoop or two of the saucy pineapple pork. Finish with chopped cilantro and slices of pickled jalapeño, if you happen to have any in the fridge.

Adapted from pinchofyum.com



Seared shrimp tacos stuffed with cabbage slaw.
Gretchen McKay / Pittsburgh Post-Gazette / TNS

